THE

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IN SHADOW.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

In shadow runs some paths to-day,
In loneliness and gloom away.

While some upon the hill-tops lie
Close to the blue arch of the sky.

Ah! some in shadow, some in sun;
So has it been since time begun.

So shall it always be, while life
Keeps hold on happiness and strife.

But sometimes shall a pathway run
Out of the shadow into sun.

And sometimes shall a pathway climb
The happy hills in summer time.

And while our paths in shadow run,
We know that somewhere shines the sun.

And we can hope that, soon or late,
Shall rest all sorrow compensate.

And trust that when the path is done
The shadow leads into the sun.

Heathersley Grange;

OR, THE

WRECKERS OF THE CORNISH COAST.

A Romance of the Days of the Young Pretender.

CHAPTER X.

LOVE'S PLEADING.

Who shall tell what terrible anguish invaded Violet Armstrong's heart, as she knelt by the side of her insensible lover, and vainly called for help?

He lay by her side still and insensible, and as she cast her eyes over the seaboard, there was not a single vestige of human life in sight.

She knew well that the villain who had fired the cowardly shot could not be far distant, however, and, added to her other fears was her dread that he might reappear again, to complete his work, or to act some dastard part towards herself.

Despairing of obtaining any aid, she allowed him to rest gently on the grass, and running down the steep and rugged path, she proceeded to the margin of the sea, and filled her lover's hat with water. This she brought up with all the haste she could, and dashed into his stony face.

The cool water soon brought signs of revival, with a sigh of relief he opened his eyes, only, however, to close them again.

"He is not dead, thank Heaven!" she cried; "but oh! where lies his wound? He will bleed to death."

As she spoke, she caught sight of a stain of blood, which, as she gazed at it, rapidly became larger and more moist.

This stain was upon the shoulder.

She instantly removed the sleeve of his coat, and forming a bandage with his handkerchief and her own, she at once bound up the wounded part, dampening it with the sea-water to staunch the bleeding. She had just completed this operation, when she beheld some one approaching in the distance.

She gazed eagerly at the approaching figure, and after a few moments she was able to distinguish who it was. Her brother—Tom Armstrong.

He could see even in the distance that something was going wrong, and he at once began to approach at a run.

He came up in time to see Henry Heathersley open his eyes.

"Why, what is the matter here?" cried he, as he caught sight of Violet's agonized face, and the death-like features of Henry. "Has he met with an accident?"

"No, indeed; it was no accident," returned the young girl. "He has been shot by some coward hand. I saw not the villain who did the deed, but I have little difficulty in guessing his name."

"It was, I venture to say, Hugh Hatterick," said Tom; "but let us not talk. Henry, my friend, can you rise? Here is some brandy. Take a little; it will revive you."

The Harbor-master's daughter gently raised her lover's head, while her brother poured between his lips the invigorating liquid.

The spirits, to a certain extent, revived his strength. "With your help," he said, "I fancy I can stand. The pain was sharp, but the wound is no mortal one—though the villain who fired it meant it to be such, I suppose. So—lend me your arm, Tom and Violet. We shall get along famously thus."

It was growing dark ere they reached the gateway of Heathersley Grange. Here Henry kissed his betrothed and took leave of her.

They had spoken little on the way, and Hugh Hatterick's name had not been mentioned. By a kind of tacit understanding, it was thought better not to name anything which would serve to raise in Henry's mind a feeling of exasperation, as he embraced her, and she left him, while Tom remained to support him, until the serving man should arrive to assist him into the presence of his father.

Old Roderick, the servant, soon appeared, and held up his hands in amazement. "Why, what is the matter, Master Henry? Wounded, eh?" he cried. "It was only the other evening that Sir Digby was attacked. The country side's getting in a pretty state. There, lean on me, Master Henry, lean on me. I'm not so old that I have not got a little strength in me yet." So saying, the old man, with the assistance of Tom Armstrong, succeeded in helping the young heir of Heathersley to the Grange.

THE TRAGEDY AT UNCLE THOMAS'S.

"She never moved, nor moaned; but just fell back against the wall very still, and silent, and—dead."—See story on 5th Page.

Here Tom left him, and in a few moments Henry was face to face with his father.

"What, my boy," cried Sir Digby, "how is this—wounded? Why, whom have *you* been offending?"

"I don't know," answered Henry, feebly, "but I have received a severe hurt."

For an instant, Sir Digby gazed in wonder and doubt at his son. Could Henry, without his knowledge, have been mixing himself up in the political warfare of the period? Was he a victim to the same hand that had struck his father? Such was the first thought that arose in the baronet's mind; his second was that the wound must be attended to, and that the doctor must be sent for.

The hurt was far more serious than any one had at first supposed, and the fear of inflammation arising from the fracture of the bone, necessitated the utmost quiet on the part of the patient.

Once more, therefore, he was a prisoner, unable to see Violet, unable to convey to her the news of his convalescence, unable to learn in what light she had taken the matter.

He had abundance of gentle attention, as may be imagined—the tender nursing of his cousin Alice, the friendly and cheering conversation of Hubert Rivasole—and it was not long before he began to recover his strength and spirits.

Sir Digby Heathersley and Sir George Heathcote regarded this illness as rather a fortunate circumstance, since it brought into hourly communion and close connection the two, whom, of all others, they desired to see united, but they were never more utterly wrong in their lives.

This nursing of Henry Heathersley simply afforded a splendid opportunity for the meetings of Hubert Rivasole and Alice, who, aided willingly by the invalid, interchanged before him freely reminiscences of old times and hopes for the future. While the fathers plotted for the success of their pet scheme, they were checkmating themselves.

On the first night that he considered himself strong enough to quit his couch, he endeavored to proceed towards the house of the Harbor-master, but it proved a vain effort.

Again, three more days slipped by, and one crisp frosty evening he proceeded, with his arm in a sling, towards the house which contained the treasure that was all in all to him. He saw no one standing near the porch, but ere he reached it—walking as he did with slow and measured steps, Violet saw him, and came running out to meet him.

"Dear, dear Henry," she cried, "oh! how glad I am to see you again."

He pressed her fondly to him, and kissed her warm red lips. "Beloved one," he said, tenderly, "I have suffered much pain, but the most I have suffered has been my separation from you."

"Ah! and *my* greatest sorrow has been that others have tended you—others have taken the place which I ought to have—the place of nurse over you when you were ill. Have you quite recovered, dear Harry?"

"No, not quite recovered, or you would not see my arm thus in a sling," he said. "I shall be better still when I have brought to justice the wretched villain who shot at me."

"Do you know then who did this treacherous deed?"

"Know it!" cried Henry Heathersley, almost violently. "Know it! why I saw his face as the shot struck me and the pain flung me backwards. I caught sight of his features—the features of the only man in Trevegar who owes me a grudge, and the only man who would do such a coward's action."

"And who was it?" asked Violet Armstrong.

"Hugh Hatterick."

Violet started and pressed her hand on her bosom, as if in pain.

"Yes," pursued Henry, "it was Hugh Hatterick, and this time he shall not be spared. He has insulted me again and again, and has refused over and over to fight me in fair fight, and now that he has tried this coward means of compassing his revenge, he shall be punished. I swear it."

"But you may have been mistaken. There is none to prove this," said Violet, hastily.

Henry glanced at her in complete amazement. "You plead for him, Violet!" he cried; "what can this mean?"

As he spoke these words the Harbor-master came out of the house. His face was very pale, and he seemed like one who had made up his mind for a sore trial—who had been fighting against evil for a long time by avoiding it, and had now determined to meet it face to face.

"Look here," Master Heathersley," he said, "I'm sorry to say I've been eavesdropping—not willingly, I may add, but I could not help hearing what you said as I sat in the porch yonder. I have grieved much to hear of your sad mishap, and I respect you very much; but Violet—she can never be yours, sir."

"Never be mine!" exclaimed Henry, hoarsely. "What mean you?"

"I mean," said the Harbor-master, leaning against the porch, and still seeming as if the weight and the woe of untold sorrow were on his heart, "I mean that Hugh Hatterick is fated to be her husband—that she *must* be his wife, for my sake, for her own sake, for the sake of her mother and brother—to save us all from ruin and disaster. Alas! Mr. Heathersley, I cannot tell you all, but you must leave her—you *must* forget her, unless you wish to see her dragged down to the lowest depths of infamy and shame."

For an instant Henry Heathersley seemed dumbfounded—astounded—confused by the words of the Harbor-master; but after a moment he recovered himself.

"My Violet!" he exclaimed, "my own Violet dragged down to infamy and shame! Not she! not she! The words have nothing in common with her. No, Douglas Armstrong, Violet shall never be the wife of Hugh Hatterick—for I have sworn it. It was he who shot at me on the cliff—he is a wrecker—a smuggler—a conspirator. I have proofs, good proofs, of all; and no matter what may betide, he shall be a prisoner within stone walls ere to-morrow's sun has risen."

The Harbor-master turned and regarded Henry Heathersley with a look of horror as he spoke. Then he slowly stepped forward and drew his child aside.

"Oh, God! Violet, you must not suffer this," he whispered, in hoarse accents. "Hugh Hatterick must go free. Remember, for the love of heaven, remember and believe, that the hour of his imprisonment would be the signal of my ruin, and of such shame and horror as would drag your mother down into a wretched and a premature grave. Oh, my child! save me from ruin, if only for a time. Protect this evil man—plead to Henry—beg him for your sake, to spare Hugh Hatterick. *For God's sake* do this, my child."

It was terribly pitiful to hear the eager stress which Douglas Armstrong laid on these last words.

"Henry," said Violet, nerving herself by a great effort, "you must not harm him."

Her lover caught her wrist fiercely, and gazed into her face. He was passionate and young, and the demon of jealousy rose into his heart.

"You plead for him again!" he cried. "What means this, Violet? What means this shame and infamy of which your father speaks? Tell me—do you love this Hugh Hatterick?"

The young girl dragged herself from his grasp, and flung herself on her knees before him—for as Henry spoke, she had caught her father's look going piteously, pleadingly, as it were, into the cottage where her mother sat.

What did she know of *him* as the stern and implacable wrecker—the man of storms—the one who had laughed at death, and plundered others to enrich himself, until the hand of retributive justice had fallen heavily upon him, and he had begun to repent in bitter anguish in secret?

All she thought of him was that he was her father—the one who had danced her on his knee as an infant—who had carried her through pleasant places as a child—who had taught her to speak—who had loved her, been proud of her, and doted on her as she grew up.

She thought of the mother, too, within, whose brow would darken, and whose eyes would dim, and whose heart might break, if the threatened terrible cloud were to overshadow her father; and as she cast herself at her lover's feet, her whole heart pleaded to him through her tearful eyes, and her mighty love prayed for her through her earnest gaze.

"Oh! Henry," she cried, "if you love me, try not to penetrate our secret—a secret I know not myself. Forgive me if I plead; it is for my mother, my brother, my father, not for myself. Some dire misfortune—I know not what—would fall upon us were Hugh Hatterick to be sent to prison. For my sake—for the sake of our love, let this idea pass from your mind. Oh! Henry, it is not much—not much to ask of *you*, whom I love so much."

Her lover gazed at her in complete astonishment—almost in anger. "Not much! Not much," he cried, "to ask me to forgive one who would have murdered me!"

"But you do not know that it was he who attempted this distardly deed," pleaded Violet—still kneeling; "you did not see him."

"You are wrong," said Henry Heathersley, "I did see him; as I fell back senseless, I saw his horrid face gliding down behind the rocks. I *know* it is he who attempted my destruction, and I will punish him."

"Oh! no, no, Henry!" cried Violet, with passionate entreaty, "not if I plead for him—not if I beg you, for the sake of our love, not to prosecute him or to raise the question further. Oh! believe me, Henry—you who are my betrothed husband—believe me it is not for my sake, I ask it—not for my own sake, but that of my dear father and mother. Do not—do not say more of this."

Henry Heathersley for a moment made no reply. The whole scene was to him absolutely inconceivable.

What desperate ruin could there be hanging over the family that Violet Armstrong should ask him to save the man whom he had seen with his own eyes attempt his murder?

He raised the young girl up, and pressed her hand as he turned away. And as he did so, he saw Douglas Armstrong leaning against a tree near, in terrible agony of spirit.

"Oh! Mr. Heathersley," said the Harbor-master, as Henry walked slowly from him, "forgive my child! She loves you well, indeed? it is for me—for her brother—for her mother, she makes this sacrifice!"

"Sir," returned Henry coldly, "I respect her motives, and promise what she has demanded."

And, with these words, sternly and bitterly said, he passed away.

How chill blew the air; how melancholy seemed the chirping of the birds; how coldly sounded the crisp leaves as he trod upon them; how bitter was the frost! And yet every sighing breeze whispered—"Go back," and the chimes of Trevegar church rang out—"Go back," and his own heart responded—"Go back."

His pride, however, fought against it, and he went to his couch in Heathersley Grange to toss and roll and think through a wretched night, when a word of gentle tenderness might have swept all trouble away.

On the next morning he rose from his bed feverish and ill. There was a shooting party proposed; he joined it, and was skillful among the skillful—gay among the gay.

In the evening the stalwart sons and pretty daughters of the neighboring gentry came in, and there was merry music and dancing, and pretty smiles beamed over a pleasant genial scene, and Henry Heathersley danced and sang with the rest.

But when the music ceased in its swell, and the tired dancers desisted for awhile, and there was time and opportunity to steal to the heavily-curtained window, and glance towards Trevegar, he stole to the casement, and as his eyes gazed across the breadth of darkness, his whole heart went out to Violet, and he resolved no longer to delay.

Slipping away unperceived from the drawing-room, he hurried out into the darkness, and sped away with all haste towards the dwelling of the Harbor-master. It is only in such hours of repentance as these that we appreciate how wrongly or how precipitately we have acted, and as Henry hurried along the dark road, a thousand excuses for Violet's behavior sprang into his mind. So eager was he to convince her that he had thoroughly and unreservedly forgiven her, that he almost ran as he neared the Harbor-master's dwelling, and he entered so precipitately that he caused some confusion and alarm.

"What ails you, Master Heathersley?" exclaimed Douglas Armstrong, seeing how flushed and excited he was. "You are a late visitor."

"Yes, indeed, I am," said Henry. "You must forgive me for my abruptness, but where is Violet? I went away somewhat abruptly last night, and have a little explanation to make."

"You are too late," said the Harbor-master; she left home this morning!"

"Left home this morning!" repeated Henry Heathersley, starting back.

"Yes; she has gone to the north of England. It was my wish, and the wish of her mother that she should go for a time. The manner in which you left her last night affected her greatly. I can assure you; but time, we hope, will work a change for the better."

"If I have caused your daughter any sorrow, I am indeed grieved," said Henry, "and I trust you will forgive me. She only, among all women, is the one I love; she only shall I ever love, and during her absence, perhaps, I may be enabled to prove it."

Then, with a few parting words to Mrs. Armstrong, he once more quitted the cottage.

CHAPTER XI.

IN THE SNARE.

"Don't remain here too long, or you will be suspected," said Henry to Captain Hubert Rivasole, and his cousin Alice Heathcote, on the following evening, as they stood beneath the shade of the grim old ruins of Trelear Castle.

It was a wild, picturesque place, this remnant of bygone days. Its cracked, tumble-down, weather-beaten walls overhung the edge of a giant cliff—such a cliff as you will find nowhere in England, save in Cornwall, scarcely one portion of it being without some flaw or blemish, but yet enough remaining to remind you of the "lords and ladies of high degree who danced to the wildsome minstrelsie" within its dark old walls; just enough to make you remember that fierce sentinels once watched the approach of an enemy from its now crumbling flat lements; just enough too to make you think of the whispers of love and devotion sighed out by lips long silent now and passed away forever.

"Do not be impatient, cousin mine," said Alice, laughing, "We have but just arrived."

"He is jealous, I verily believe," added Captain Rivasole, genially.

"In one way I may answer yes," said Henry, "but in all other senses no. Well, the old adage is a true one—two are company, three are none; so I will stroll away along yonder cliff, and leave you awhile. Adieu—*au revoir*."

"*Au revoir*," said Rivasole, and with a wave of the hand young Heathersley departed.

"He is good and worthy fellow," exclaimed the captain, as he walked slowly amid the ruins with Alice Heathcote. "I am sorry to see him so oppressed with sadness."

"I suppose he is sad from the same reason that you were once so sad; because he has lost the lady of his love," responded Alice, laughing.

"You are sure then that he has one?"

"Yes, I know it; he has confided to me all his secrets. He is betrothed to Violet Armstrong, the daughter of the Harbor-master, and she has within the last three days quitted this part of the country."

"Then, like a true knight-errant he should follow her," cried Rivasole. "But come, sweet Alice, let us leave others, and talk of ourselves. I leave for France in three days."

"So soon!" murmured Alice, sadly.

"Yes, dearest, I must go. Duty compels me. On the third night from this the smuggling vessel which brought me from France will await me not far from the bay, and I must go. And even now, dearest, when I have so unexpectedly met you—so happily renewed our love—I am going away from you with no greater claim upon you than ever. Is it not so?"

"Not quite so," returned Alice, with modest fervor; "because you carry with you a firmer assurance than ever of my never-changing love."

He caught her to his heart, and embraced her fondly. "Dear one," he said, "in spite of my unhappiness at going from you, you make my heart leap with pleasure. But oh! if you would but consent to my wish—if you would but become my wife before I quit the shores of England, with what different feelings should I return to my native country. Oh, Alice! who knows how long I may be absent from your side?—and who knows, too, in that time what influences may be brought to bear upon you? As my betrothed only, you can be forced to marry another; as my wife, never."

"A very pretty arrangement fortunately foiled, sir!" cried a loud voice near them, and with the words, a tall figure stepped from behind the ruined wall, and confronted them.

It was Sir George Heathcote! Alice turned deadly pale, and clung to her lover, as her father's eyes fell in fierce anger upon her.

"Sir!" cried the French captain, haughtily. "I cannot surely be called upon by a man of honor to answer for words which have only been heard by *a secret listener?*"

The intonation which he laid on the last syllable exasperated the baronet.

"Zounds, sir," he cried, "zounds! Do you impugn my honor?—you who have been endeavoring to steal my daughter from me? I heard you, sir—yes, sir, I heard you, and I listened to hear no more. I spared my child the painful necessity of refusing you. I refuse for her, sir—I refuse for her. Her husband will be Henry Heathersley, and no other."

"Sir George," said Hubert, "your daughter's wishes will, I am sure, be considered a little."

"My daughter," replied the baronet, a little softened by Hubert's respectful manner, "will form her wishes in accordance with those of her father. I beg, therefore, that this subject may be dropped."

"A cool way of disposing of two hearts that beat but for one another," said Rivasole to himself. But he added aloud—

"Sir George, I will act as you suggest. At another time, however, when we are alone, and more calm, I will endeavor to persuade you to *my* way of thinking."

Sir George shook his head. "Impossible!" he said. "Impossible! That you will never do."

Then he turned to his daughter. "Alice," he said, "come with me."

With undisguised reluctance, the young girl released her lover's arm.

Extending her hand to him, with unaffected grace, she said, "Good-bye, Hubert; better times, let us trust, will come."

"Let us hope so, dearest," he said.

Then he added, in a rapid whisper, as he raised her hand to his lips—

"On the third night, at ten—on the terrace!"

"Sir George," he continued, as the baronet placed his daughter's arm within his, "may I ask you to grant me a favor, which will be better for all of us?"

"Tell me, sir, what it is, and if it be within my power, you may be sure I shall grant it," replied Sir George haughtily.

"It is simply this," said Hubert; "do not mention this scene to Sir Digby Heathersley. Let it pass from your mind, and let us be as good friends as ever."

Sir George did not take the hand which was frankly extended to him, but he bowed graciously. "For my daughter's sake, and my own," he said, "I promise that. I would not have it known by Sir Digby that my daughter had met you in this clandestine way. You will, I know, be compelled to return to Heathersley Grange, but from this moment my child and you must be strangers."

And so they parted—the warm-hearted young English girl, and the hot-blooded, chivalrous young Frenchman—the one dejected, wretched, desponding; the other, in the fullness of his love, more determined than ever that he would overcome all obstacles and win her, in spite of all, for his wife.

He stood gazing for a few moments after the drooping figure of the one he loved so well, and then he turned away towards the path along which he expected to meet Henry Heathersley. His heart was full to over

flowing, and he had need of some one to whom he could tell his troubles and his wishes. The generous, manly young heir of Heathersley was just the one to whom he could unbosom himself, and relieve the burden of his over-charged mind.

Along the path by the cliff, therefore, he went walking slowly towards the point where, upon a recent occasion, Henry had received the treacherous shot from Hugh Hatterick.

The wrecker had not shown himself since. Bully as he was he had no desire to show himself too much in public, for people had not forgotten to whisper strange things about him. They were few, indeed, in the neighborhood of Trevegar who had not formed their own opinions about the relations of Henry Heathersley and the daughter of the Harbor-master, and who were not aware how fierce could be Hugh Hatterick's resentment.

As Hubert walked along dreamily the shades of evening began to thicken, and he passed the town, and neared Dead Man's Point before he was well aware of whither he was going.

Just as he reached that part where the ground began to rise suddenly, he saw, or fancied he saw, Henry Heathersley before him at no great distance; but he had scarcely set his eyes upon the vision, when it disappeared, as if by magic, into the earth.

Hubert rushed forward, but he could find no trace of any spot where his friend could have vanished—the earth seemed solid as the rock itself everywhere around.

Astonished at this circumstance, he continued his search for some time, but at length gave it up as useless, and took his way towards Heathersley Grange.

Henry, meanwhile, when he left the lovers, wended his way disconsolately enough along the cliffs, thinking of the times out of number when he and Violet had wandered along that same path as happy as Alice and Hubert. He, too, wandered on, without taking note of where he was going, until he felt the chill air of night upon him, and saw the darkness creeping over land and sea.

Then he turned back, keeping further away from the cliff side, and approaching to the clump of trees and brushwood which concealed the entrance to the Dead Man's Cave.

It was here that he disappeared. Suddenly he found himself seized by the foot; the earth appeared to give way beneath him, a choking sensation came in his throat, as if the dust and sand were being quickly driven into it, and then he emerged into a glare of light.

In an instant he saw where he was.

He was in the smuggler's cave, and surrounded by as dark and ill-looking a set of ruffians as ever blotted with their infamy God's beautiful earth.

The man who had dragged him down was none other than Hugh Hatterick.

The wrecker burst into a loud laugh, as the young heir of Heathersley cast a wondering glance at the weather-beaten, fierce-looking men, and their strange clothes and the wild scene.

"Ha, ha! my hearty," cried he, "ye didn't expect we'd meet again like this, eh?"

"I do not, in general, trouble myself to think of you at all, therefore I expected nothing. If I have bestowed a thought on you lately, it has been but to fancy to myself how well you would swing on the gallows tree on Trelour Common."

"Have a care, my fine fellow," exclaimed Hugh Hatterick, bursting with rage at a speech which at once, in the eyes of the smugglers, placed their courage on an equal footing. "You are *here* on *my* ground; tread gently, or ye might find a volcano beneath you."

"A truce to your talk," exclaimed Henry; "why am I here?"

The wrecker indulged in a dreary attempt at laughter.

"Comrades!" cried he, turning to the smugglers, "I found this man lurking about the entrance of our cave, and watching our movements. It is he who has baulked us for months past. It was he who set the coast guard on us last night, and prevented our run. It is he who has spoiled our trade and has set the spies along the coast, so that not an inch of the coast line is ours. What shall be done with him?"

"Our vessel starts in two nights hence," cried a rough-looking sailor, "bind him and ship him to the Indies. The 'Atalanta,' that lies by Kremiss Point, is short of hands, and will gladly take him aboard."

"A pretty arrangement truly, gentlemen, exclaimed Henry Heathersley, drawing his sword; "and pray what is to be my fate if I refuse?"

"Death," cried Hugh Hatterick, fiercely, as he drew a pistol from his belt and advanced.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MARRIAGE MORNING.

Light, so low upon earth,
You send a flash to the sun.
Here is the golden close of love,
All my wooing is done.
O the woods and the meadows,
Woods where we hid from the wet,
Stiles where we stay'd to be kind,
Meadows in which we met!
Light, so low in the vale,
You flash and lighten afar:
For this is the golden morning of love,
And you are his morning star.
Flash, I am coming, I come,
By meadow and stile and wood:
O lighten into my eyes and my heart,
Into my heart and my blood?
Heart, are you great enough
For a love that never tires?
O heart, are you great enough for love?
I have heard of thorns and briers.
Over the thorns and briers,
Over the meadows and stiles,
Over the world to the end of it
Flash for a million miles.—*Tennyson.*

ONE'S FRIENDS.

Money can buy many things, good and evil. All the wealth of the world could not buy you a friend, nor pay you for the loss of one. "I have wanted only one thing to make me happy," Hazlitt writes, "but, wanting that, have wanted everything." And, again, "My heart, shut up in the prison-house of this rude clay, has never found, nor will it ever find, a heart to speak to."

We are the weakest of spendthrifts if we let one friend drop off through inattention, or let one push away another, or if we hold aloof from one for petty jealousy or heedless slight or roughness. Would you throw away a diamond because it pricked you? A friend is not to be weighed against the jewels of the earth. If there is coolness or unkindness between us, let us come face to face and have it out. Quick, before love grows cold. "Life is too short to quarrel in," or to carry black thoughts of friends. If I was wrong, I am sorry; if you, then I am sorry yet, for should I not grieve for my friend's misfortune?

And the mending of your fault does not lie with me. But the forgiving it does, and that is a happier office. Give me your hand and call it even. There! it is gone; and I thank a kind Heaven I keep my friend still! A friend is too precious a thing to be lightly held, but it must be a little heart that cannot find room for more than one or two. The kindness I feel for you warms me toward all the rest, makes me long to do something to make you all happy. It is easy to lose a friend, but a new one will not come for calling, nor make up for the old one when he comes.

SCHOOL STUDIES.—Had I the choice of only four things to be taught my children, they should be:—To sing well; to read well; to write well; and to sketch well. Perfection in all these will earn their possessor a maintenance in any country, and enable him to amuse himself or entertain company, whether it be under a rock in the desert, or upon a crag in the sea.

ON SILVER WINGS.

BY THE AUTHOR of "Joyce Dormer's Story."

CHAPTER XLIII.

AN UNEXPECTED ALLY.

Diana, waking after her night of fitful slumber, her dreams half spent in realms of happiness and half in regions of despair, came at once to the remembrance of what had taken place on the previous evening.

It was too strongly impressed upon her mind for her to have the slightest doubt concerning her impressions—nay, she had even been unconsciously arranging her plans during the night. Her brain had worked on, despite the sleep that had laid her other senses to rest; and the first words she said to herself were—

"There is something definite to go upon; the Signorina will advise me now."

And on the whole—though she knew that John Carteret, through his marriage, was now separated from her forever—she felt more contented, more settled, stronger, more hopeful of the future than she had done since her engagement to Jasper.

"I did not love him as I ought to have done. I was only trying to do right," she said; "and this is just one of those seeming accidents that mould one's path, and send one straight, and show one what to do. Nothing happens by chance."

And then she fell into a reverie—for the thought brought up much that John Carteret had said to her.

"'Every life planned,'" she murmured; "'every hair of your head numbered. Not a sparrow falls to the ground unnoticed. Complete and minute supervision. In the millions and millions of human beings, each life isolated and individual—a perfect life in itself, fully chaptered out, fully recognized, fully dealt with. No massing together, no human distinctions made; each a soul, as important as all other souls, struggling its way through the world man thinks so great, so all-important, to the greater after-world he often thinks so lightly of."

She descended to breakfast. Mrs. Seaton was not coming down. She seldom did now.

"Mrs. Seaton had sent to see if there were any letters for her," said the butler.

"One, Smith."

Then Diana turned to look at her own three. One from Jasper, which she opened first. He would be at home in less than a week; by that time, he hoped that everything would be completed. And then he entered into a long description of the beauties of the coast scenery.

Diana tossed it aside with a half-contemptuous laugh. She would never go there. Her old antagonism was rising. She was beginning to hate Jasper; and yet throughout the letter there breathed forth such a pathos of passionate love, that the laugh ended in a half sigh, and she said—

"Poor Jasper!—I suppose he likes me."

Then she took up one of the other letters, and looked for a moment at the address; it was in a hand she did not recognize. She looked at the post-mark—Marchington; and she wondered who could be writing to her from Marchington. It was a lady's hand. It must be some one whom she had met with when she was abroad. And without much feeling of interest, she opened it.

John Carteret's writing!

A short farewell letter, at the head of which was written, "To be sent after my death."

After death!

She trembled so violently that the letter fell from her hand, the blood in her veins seemed to cease flowing, and her heart scarcely seemed to beat. She sat speechless—senseless almost—for the blow was so terrible.

Dead! And he had loved her to the last. Dead! Not married!

She could not understand. How should she? The letter told her nothing. Not one word of explanation. It simply brought the fact before her that he was dead—that his last thought had been of her—that he had loved her truly to the end. And now it was over!

She sat there in her misery—not moving, scarcely breathing—with no power to utter one single moan to relieve her overcharged heart. Her eyes were fixed in vacant horror on the fallen letter, which she was too much stupefied to pick up. Its envelope, however, still lay on the table beside the remaining letter. And all at once, raising her eyes, she saw it; and it struck her that the handwriting was the same. And, looking closer, she perceived that "Open this first" was written upon it. It might give her some information. And yet, what information could it give her but the account of his death?

It was a long time before she could summon up sufficient courage to look into it; and then she was afraid to read the sorrowful record that she knew she should find there. It was a long letter, and she turned to the signature.

"Alice Carteret!"

His sister! The girl she had seen at Thale. She covered her face with her hands, and tried to nerve herself to read the letter.

At length she began; and, as she read, her face grew brighter—her eyes eagerly devoured the contents—she hurried on—she read to the end. She paused, breathless, and burst into a passion of weeping.

Not dead! Thank God, not dead!—though very ill. There might be time. If she could see him once again before he died!

"By accident! The letter came by accident," his sister said.

No accident, Diana knew; but the sequel to the paper she had found the evening before.

She gathered up her letters; and before many minutes had elapsed, was on her way to the Neris' cottage.

The Neris were early people; their matins had been over long ago. Signor Neri was away at the organ, and Signora Neri was seated by the fireside, working at some beautiful embroidery she had learned to do among the nuns abroad.

"What is it, *carissima?*" she asked, as Diana flew into the room, throwing herself down beside her friend, and after vainly trying to make her quivering lips frame the words she wished to speak, burst into tears, and sobbed so vehemently that Signora Neri was alarmed, and wondered what fresh trouble had happened to her. But she said nothing. She gently unfasted her mantle, and took off her hat; and then she stroked her hair soothingly, whilst fresh bursts of sobbing prevented Diana from yet speaking. At last she grew calmer and calmer; and then she drew her letters forth, and said—

"Read—read!" and she hid her face in the folds of Signora Neri's dress.

And Signora Neri read; and as she did so, the color mounted to her brow.

"I was right," she muttered to herself—"there was treachery somewhere. Giuseppe was right. The spirit of the Sybil was aroused in a foreign land. The colder hearts of the north judge not as we of warm southern blood. *Povcrina carina!—carina!*" she said aloud. "What can I do for thee?"

"Signora, I must go to him," said Diana, springing up. "I must go to him. May I not?" she asked, imploringly.

"Surely, *carina*—who would forbid thee?"

"Mrs. Seaton—every one—every one but you. But I must go. There is no time to lose. You must tell me, Signora—you are older—you know more of life than I do. *He* would not think I should not come. *He* loves me still, Signora. Shall I not go and see him once, when he is dying, Signora—dying?"

"Thou shalt go, poor child! Giuseppe and I will go with thee," answered Signora Neri. None shall prevent thee."

And the quick Italian blood rose in the pale face, and Signora Neri felt the glow of youth come upon her in her fervent sympathy with Diana. Ah! could it have been only so with Ercolo and herself, what a life-consolation it would have been. If she had only heard him breathe once more "Orsola!" with his dying lips, she would have heard it still vibrating, like an angel-whisper, calling her to another world. But Ercolo had been married, and John Carteret was not.

And so John Carteret was true, and Jasper Seaton was false. She understood not how it had been yet—that was at present incomprehensible. But she felt that Our Lady of the Sorrowful Heart had taken heed to the many prayers she had offered in Diana's behalf, though the answer was so sad a one.

"*Carissima,*" she said "the Good Shepherd hath pity on His sheep. He will lead thee tenderly. Our Lady hath heard me."

Diana, however, scarcely heeded the whispered comfort. Her heart was full of one thought only—she should see John Carteret once more; should speak to him, and hear him speak once more. The pent-up feelings that she had restrained through the strong principle that he had implanted in her soul had burst their bounds; the barriers of endurance that she had upbuilt were broken down. They had done their work—they had been strong walls about her soul—they had kept the wings that bore her onward uncrushed, uninjured; but now the time of waiting was at an end, the time of patient endurance over, the time for action had come. Another epoch of her life was ended, a cycle of suffering completed—perhaps only to give place to a still greater one.

And now for action.

She had travelled very little in England. She knew nothing of lines, and trains, and distances; and Signora Neri knew still less.

"Giuseppe will tell us. He will be at home soon."

But Diana was too restless to wait. She would go to the station, and make all inquiries, and they would start by the first train, and she left Signora Neri, promising to be back again without delay.

"But the station is far—thou wilt be weary."

"I could fly," returned Diana. "I can feel no fatigue."

"Our Lady be blessed forever," ejaculated Signora Neri as Diana disappeared. "*Ave Maria!* who hast not been unmindful of my supplications for my darling. The truth is brought to life in spite of falseness. The enemy shall not triumph. Nay, Giuseppe, who had the keener sense, thou or I? And yet thy music told thee true—the child's heart is with her lover still, and hath been; and her soul's anguish hath been greater than I have reckoned. Now may all be well; and in the last farewell, may the great peace that reunited souls shall know in Paradise, overshadow the wrongly parted ones."

Diana sped along, pale, agitated, yet full of sudden determination that would have surprised even Jasper Seaton, well as he knew her. She was so absorbed that she did not notice the tall figure that, with stately step, approached her.

"Diana!"

And Diana found herself face to face with Miss Pyecroft. She had not seen her for a long time; there had been a mutual feeling of uncomfortableness, though perhaps neither could have satisfactorily accounted for it. But to-day Miss Pyecroft involuntarily stopped for the look of distress, almost of agony, on the girl's face startled her. It was too real to pass unnoticed; and a throb of something more weak-minded than might have been expected from Miss Pyecroft's rigid exterior moved her heart. It was the first time that she had ever felt a sentiment of anything like pity for Diana; and, in spite of herself, this softer feeling took possession of her. She had never liked Jasper Seaton; and, by some strange intuition, Diana's visible emotion in some way connected itself with this dislike of hers.

"Poor thing!—perhaps she is not happy, after all," was Miss Pyecroft's inward comment, as she exclaimed—"Diana!"

Diana looked at her with a fixed, stony look. She only felt that Miss Pyecroft was a hindrance, and would have passed on. But the unnatural look caused Miss Pyecroft to ask—

"What is the matter, Di?"

There was a gentler inflection in the voice than Diana had ever heard before, and somehow it inspired her with confidence; and a new idea flashed into her mind. Miss Pyecroft was a clever woman of business, and might give her the information she wanted better than it could be obtained at the railway station. Then, too, Miss Pyecroft was strong-minded, and had a certain share of common sense in worldly matters. And yet Miss Pyecroft was one of her antipathies. She looked up inquiringly,

"What is the matter?" asked Miss Pyecroft, beginning to feel somewhat alarmed. "Any trouble at the Manor House?"

"No," quivered forth Diana's trembling lips.

"There is something the matter somewhere," said Miss Pyecroft, in a determined voice. "You are not fit to be going anywhere by yourself. You can scarcely stand."

For Diana suddenly brought to a pause, agitation supervened the excitement which had hitherto supported her.

Miss Pyecroft laid her hand on her shoulder.

"Come with me," she said. "We are close by Brierly House. You can come in, and tell me what is the matter, and I will advise and suggest was it to be done."

At any other time, Diana would have rebelled against such a suggestion; but she was so completely overpowered, that she felt willing to be led by any one who could give her help; and the unfeigned pity which betrayed itself in Miss Pyecroft's voice had its due effect. She suffered herself to be led along by Miss Pyecroft, who, without saying another word, turned her steps homeward, and paused not until she had reached her own door.

"I'm glad Letitia and Sophia are absent for an hour or two," she said to herself. "They would otherwise fall into all sorts of untenable speculations."

Then she marshalled Diana into her private parlor; and, making her sit down, unlocked a cupboard, and taking a decanter therefrom, poured out a glass of wine.

"If you don't take it, you'll faint; and you must not do that, with all you have to tell me. Drink it."

Diana obeyed, and Miss Pyecroft sat down opposite to her.

"Now, my dear, what is it?"

Miss Pyecroft had assumed a magisterial and inquisitorial air; and yet with it was mingled a shade of tenderness that sat rather awkwardly upon her, and which, though real, gave her manner a certain constraint and unnaturalness. She waited for Diana's answer; and Diana, collecting her thoughts, and doubtful at what portion of her story to begin, began at the very end of it, and stammered out—

"I want to know the time of the trains to Marchington."

Miss Pyecroft slowly put on her spectacles, and gazed at the girl, who looked up at her as if her life depended on the answer she should receive. Could she be in her senses?

"Marchington!" she ejaculated. "Who on earth wants to go to Marchington?"

"I do; and Signor Neri and his sister are going with me."

More and more incomprehensible, thought Miss Pyecroft, not relaxing in her scrutiny.

"And what are you going to Marchington for?"

"Mr. Carteret is dying, and I am going to see him before he dies."

And the pale lips grew whiter, and the look of agony dilated the eyes. Diana gave a great choking sob, and then was still again.

Had Miss Pyecroft been shot, she could not have leaped up more suddenly than she did at Diana's words. She was in many respects a shrewd, clever woman, in spite of the idiosyncrasies that closed her eyes to much that passed around her. But when her eyes began to open at all, she saw in a tolerably comprehensive manner, and she swept the whole of the last two years into a rapid epitome that would not have been unworthy of a higher genius. Then she gradually drew from Diana the main facts of the case; and though Diana could not tell her that things were as they were, without being able to explain why, and did not show to her, as she had shown to Signora Neri, the memorandum of Madame de Mouline, nor yet mention Jasper's name, still Miss Pyecroft, waxing firmer in her prejudices against Jasper Seaton, had no doubt in her own mind but that he was in some way at the root of the matter.

"There is no train to Marchington," was Miss Pyecroft's first and most unexpected observation, given in a meditative manner.

Diana clutched her arm nervously.

"No through train, I mean. Let me see," and she took up a Bradshaw. She had conquered Bradshaw, and felt it was no mean triumph; but it had been the result of hours of laborious study. She turned over the leaves. "Marchington—Overton—Rillsford—yes—starting from the station here at two—catch express—two hours to wait—Government train—stoppage—ten—twelve.—Yes, that will be it—clear enough."

But it was anything but clear to Diana, who became more and more mystified.

"Yes," said Miss Pyecroft, turning to Diana. "By starting away from here at two o'clock, we catch the mail train, wait two hours at Rillsford, then go direct to Marchington, with only one change. We get into Marchington at four o'clock in the morning. You can stand a night journey, I suppose?"

"I can stand anything," answered Diana, revived by the precision with which Miss Pyecroft had sketched out the route; "and the Neris will not mind."

"Pooh, my dear. The Neris are not going. You can't be running all over England with foreigners who know nothing of our ways, either railway or social," returned Miss Pyecroft. "It wouldn't do at all. I shall go with you myself, and then no one can say anything against it."

"You, Miss Pyecroft!" was all that Diana in her surprise could answer.

"*I.* I have taken a retrospect of the past two years, and have determined that this is the right step to take. Mr. Carteret is a clergyman of the Church of England. I have misjudged him, but I know what is due to the clergy. Having made up my mind, nothing moves me. I go with you. I shall be at the Manor House, in the Broadmead fly, at one o'clock."

For a moment, Diana stood doubtful whether or not she should accept the proposal; but from Miss Pyecroft's decisions there was never any appeal; and as all the advantages it offered flashed upon her, she was inclined almost to fall into the heterodoxy of Miss Letty and Miss Sophia, and to have strong faith in Miss Pyecroft's infallibility.

"It is much better," said Signora Neri, surprised to see Diana so soon again. "You do not mind that woman *terrible*, who do understand travelling. With her can you not go wrong."

And Diana went her way to the Manor House, half wondering whether all her life she had not been doing injustice to Miss Pyecroft.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE LAST OF BROADMEAD.

A fresh difficulty presented itself to Diana as she walked up from the dolphin-crowned iron gates to the Manor House. What was she to say to Mrs. Seaton, and how explain to her this sudden journey?

She was naturally a good deal agitated. She knew that she was taking a very decided and important step; and although she in no way drew back from it, she was not blind to the difficulties she should have to encounter.

Mrs. Seaton had not yet come down; she seldom did until luncheon time, so Diana went to speak to her.

"Where have you been all the morning, Diana? Prime says she saw you flying along the avenue directly after breakfast. You might have come to inquire how I was; and I wanted to say several things to you, for I had a long letter from Jasper, and there seem to be a good many things yet that we shall have to consider."

Diana sat down, for she trembled so that she could scarcely stand.

"You will bring on palpitations if you fly about in this ridiculous manner," said Mrs. Seaton. "I suppose you have been to the Neris, and have all but scampered across the fields. You really should be more dignified now that you are going to be married, Di. Besides, it is very injurious. Moderate exercise is all very well; but these violent exertions I don't approve of, and you will be quite ill when Jasper comes home."

"I shall be away when Jasper comes home," answered Diana, speaking very slowly, so as to ensure her words coming out clearly and steadily. "I am going to Marchington this afternoon."

And she looked fixedly at Mrs. Seaton.

"Are you mad, Diana?" asked Mrs. Seaton—noting, for the first time, the strange, agonized expression of the girl's face.

"No," replied Diana, her nerve rising now that she had made a plunge—"I am not mad. John Carteret is dying at Marchington, and I am going to see him before he dies."

Mrs. Seaton turned as white as Diana, and Diana thought she appeared as if about to faint.

"How do you know? What do you mean?" she stammered out.

"By a fortunate mistake," said Diana, gaining more and more courage, "a letter that I ought not to have received until after Mr. Carteret's death was posted by accident. A second letter from his sister explains it; and I learn that John Carteret is not married, and that he has never loved any one but me. He has been true to me—truer than I have been; and now he is dying, and I am going to him."

"Absurd—pray don't talk such nonsense, Diana. You are engaged to Jasper. You can't go. You must not go. I never heard of such a thing."

But Diana's old spirit had returned.

"I am going, and nothing shall hinder me. I love John Carteret with all my heart, and soul, and strength. I do not care for Jasper."

And she walked out of the room, leaving Mrs. Seaton in a state bordering upon frenzy. What would Jasper say? What would he do? What could Mrs. Seaton do to prevent it? Perhaps she could persuade Diana to wait until Jasper's return.

After awhile she rang the bell.

"Prime, tell Miss Ellis I wish to speak to her again."

Diana did not come immediately. She was heaping her clothes into a trunk, scarcely knowing what she was doing, and yet selecting with strange instinctive discrimination. When she had ended her task, she returned to Mrs. Seaton's room.

"I am sorry to hear about Mr. Carteret's illness, Di. But I dare say it is not so bad as you imagine. You had better wait until Jasper returns, and then he can go to Marchington, and see all about it. It is not proper for you to go alone."

"I am not going alone. Miss Pyecroft is going with me."

"Miss Pyecroft!—a meddling old goose. What right has she to interfere in other people's business!" asked Mrs. Seaton, waxing wroth again.

"She thinks I ought not to go with the Neris."

"With the Neris? I should think not. Then it is as I could well imagine. Those scheming, plotting, disreputable foreigners are at the bottom of this conspiracy to bring you and that poverty-stricken curate together again. It is shameful."

Diana sprang towards Mrs. Seaton.

"Silence!" she exclaimed, in so imperative a voice that Mrs. Seaton shrank back, muttering to herself—

"I believe she is a tigress."

"Silence!" repeated Diana. "Say nothing against John Carteret or my friends. I have been deceived, betrayed, imposed upon, and you know it, and Jasper too. Give him this paper when he returns, and tell him to think no more of me, for I am almost beginning to hate him again."

She tossed Madame de Mouline's memorandum, which she had enclosed in an envelope, upon the table, and was turning away.

"Stop!" said Mrs. Seaton. "I wish you to understand one thing—if you leave my house in this extraordinary manner, you do not return to it."

"I have no wish to do so," replied Diana. "I do not intend it."

And yet, until that moment, this necessity had never occurred to her. Now it seemed all at once clear to her that the Manor House could never be a home for her again, and a feeling of wonder passed across her mind that she had not thought of it before. Even now she did not realize how much was comprehended in that necessity; the evil of the present being all-sufficient to over power every thought of the future. Her indignation, also, at her own suffering and at John Carteret's suffering—brought about, as she now firmly believed, through Jasper and Mrs. Seaton, though she understood not how—drove away every sentiment of gratitude that she might otherwise have felt for their long care of her. Grief, fear, perplexity, anxiety, had wrought her up almost to madness.

"I never wish to see Broadmead again," she said passionately.

"And I never wish to see you here again," returned Mrs. Seaton, as warmly. "Unruly, passionate, insolent, ungrateful to the end; turning against your benefactors, when you should remember that to them you owe food, clothing, shelter, everything. Even the very money that is enabling you to perform this act of insubordination has been furnished by my infatuated son."

They were bitter words—the more bitter for the truth they contained. Diana drew out her purse, into which she had crammed all the money that Jasper had so liberally supplied—and so delicately, that she had never thought of it in this aspect before. She laid it on the table beside the letter, and walked out of the room.

"I have no money," she said to Miss Pyecroft as she entered the fly. "Will you lend me some?"

"I have thought of everything," answered Miss Pyecroft. Then, turning to the driver "Drive slowly," she said, "to the station. I have allowed sufficient time for you to proceed carefully."

And so Diana left Broadmead.

In the whirl of excitement she realized nothing, cared for nothing, thought of nothing but John Carteret—dying, perhaps dead, before she could reach him. And she sank back in the corner of the carriage in a sort of lethargy.

Miss Pyecroft, on the contrary, was in her element. She had undertaken a mission; she was of importance. Things had been rather dull of late at Broadmead, and there had been no special occasion on which she could assert the superior force of the Pyecroft nature. Moreover, she felt an unwonted sentiment of pity for Diana—wherefore she could not imagine, unless it were that Miss Pyecroft experienced a certain twinge of self-reproach at the possible share which she might have had in bringing matters to their present position. She hoped she had been in no way an accessory, and yet she was not altogether easy in her mind.

So they travelled on.

And Mrs. Seaton sat down, and wrote to her son.

An incoherent letter, and not accurate as to facts, though it carried a true impression. "Mr. Carteret has written to Diana, and she has left Broadmead, and gone to him." Later on, it occurred to her to telegraph; but the telegram contained no explanations; it simply said—"You are wanted at Broadmead at once. Come home."

And, owing to his having wandered away, and not returning to his hotel until late the next day, Jasper received the telegram and the letter together.

He started home at once, travelled without stopping, and reached Broadmead, pale and haggard, on the evening of the second day after Diana's departure.

"Where is she?" he asked his mother.

"At Marchington. Perhaps this will explain."

And she gave him Diana's letter.

He opened it, but found only his sister's memorandum.

"The ——! Where did she get this? How could I have been so confoundedly careless! It ought to have been destroyed long ago. I should have made it all right without this to remind me. She's had as much and more spent upon her, and all in the end would have been hers."

So he justified himself, in answer to what he knew her thoughts must be.

"I told her so," said Mrs. Seaton, vaguely, supposing that some allusion to money was made. "Her purse is heavy enough, but she would not take it."

"And she went without money! How could you let her do so, mother?"

"How could I let her go?—the ungrateful willful creature! I always said she was a heathen. I believe it now. She's gone; and, thank goodness, she's not coming back again."

Jasper groaned. He laid his head upon his hands, whilst Mrs. Seaton went on vituperating Diana to her heart's content. Her son seemed not to hear her at first—then he suddenly looked up.

"Mother," he said, "be silent. I love her."

Mrs. Seaton paused in surprise. If he had not been her son, her idol, she would have asked, "Are you such a fool?" As it was, she said—

"Now? Still! And are you going to Marchington after her?"

"To what end?" he answered, bitterly.

And then a new idea arose.

"Is she alone?"

"No. Miss Pyecroft, of all people, went with her."

"Miss Pyecroft!"

"Yes—Miss Pyecroft accompanies her to see her dying lover," returned Mrs. Seaton, with a slight sneer.

"Dying!"

"Yes—dying or dead, he may be, from the fuss that was made. He may be dead, for all I know."

"Dead!" repeated Jasper, a sudden inspiration of hope returning once more. He had triumphed over every obstacle, so far; why might not fortune still favor him? If death should come to give him one more chance, he might even yet triumph. "Yes, he would go to Marchington. He ought to go. He was Diana's guardian. He could explain his own way. He had committed no actual fraud. Diana would have her legacy. She had had it already, in one sense. He had no intention of withholding it. And as for John Carteret, with regard to him, he had only repeated what he had heard. And if John Carteret had chosen to give up Diana without sufficient inquiry, was it any fault of his? Yes, he would go to Marchington. Dying, dying—perhaps dead!" he muttered to himself.

And his face lighted up, and his heart leaped up fiercely; for, with all his shortcomings, he loved Diana fervently, passionately!

(CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.)

KATE ALSTON.

A STORY OF MODERN BELLEDOM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MARY E. WOODSON.

CHAPTER I.

"Am I *au fait?*" said Kate Alston naively, as she tripped into her own parlor, and after a mock courtesy stood face to face before Neil Ellmore, directly under the blaze of the great central chandelier.

"No, you are not," he returned, with a look of undisguised admiration as he took in the effect of her ball costume from head to foot. "You are too beautiful by half. And that means more than the best of Troubadours of ancient times would have sung of his 'lady love' in a hundred pages." And surpassingly lovely indeed must Kate Alston have appeared to any one who could have beheld her standing there in the majesty of her perfect womanhood, clad this evening, for a marvel, in a simple dress of white crape, that fell in fleecy folds about her superb figure, while a wreath of camelias had usurped the empire of costly jewels, and twined among the waves of her wealth of golden hair.

"How shall I thank you for gratifying a whim of mine this evening?" asked Ellmore at length, in a low, half-amorous tone.

"By forbearing to flatter me," she replied, with a slight tremor in her voice and an unusual light in her large, lustrous eyes. "I thought *you* and *I* had agreed to be quite honest with each other."

"It is not flattery to tell you that you are the most provokingly irresistible woman I have ever seen, for you know too truly that you are. And you assert your empire with the tyranny of a woman whose right, and consequent *might*, the boldest dare not dispute," returned Ellmore with a half-sigh. "When I asked you a week ago to gratify me for once in your life by laying aside silks and jewels for this occasion of display, where the plain looking *parvenu* might match you in the glitter of paraphernalia, I made the request (supposing you kind enough to grant it) with a selfish desire to see you in the simple, school-girl attire of a pretty woman, whose beauty is ever most adorned when unadorned. I am gratified indeed, but it seems to me in its first emotion that the pleasure is strongly allied to pain. I am accustomed to think of you as a 'magnificent woman,' in the wordly acceptation of the term; to see you arrayed like a queen, and to find you asserting your empire over all hearts, young, old, married and single, to the last legitimate extent with the '*le roi le veut*' of hereditary sovereignty. But when you take the new role of *la belle paysanne*, and queen it in that too, with the simple yet glorious majesty of womanly charms, you touch me—you impress me anew with a tenderness wholly foreign to the feelings I had entertained for you, and which I will frankly own to you I do not like to encourage, for I am afraid of you, Kate."

Kate Alston sighed rather wearily as she took his arm, and went out to the carriage that waited for them at the door.

"You still think I have no heart?" she said, as he helped to arrange her shawl more comfortably about her.

"Is it Addison who gives us the analysis of the heart of a coquette?" he asked with a forced laugh, for it was hard to stand with her beautiful face so near his own and yet be altogether strong. "It was some one in the Spectator, I know. You remember what he says. You will go on like Alexander zealously to conquer the world about you, and when that is done—still insatiate—you will weep if another realm is not offered to you. Women as beautiful as yourself should by all means marry young; drinking the poisonous cup of flattery, they become intoxicated for the remainder of their lives. They may sparkle, they may glitter, and be set up as a general idol before whom the world is to offer homage; but they are wholly unfitted for a quiet, domestic life."

The words of remonstrance that rose to Kate Alston's lips were stifled, for she feared lest he should understand more of her heart than she was willing to reveal to him; and the carriage pausing just then, Neil Ellmore assisted his fair charge to alight, and led her into the brilliantly illuminated hall. It was the palatial residence of the Governor of M———. The General Assembly had convened for the winter, and his excellency, wishing to greet his coadjutors in law-making with the friendliest zeal possible, had some weeks previous issued tickets for a grand ball, of which the occasion now alluded to was the celebration.

Kate Alston, the reigning belle of A———, was of course among the invited guests, as was her escort, Neil Ellmore, a distinguished young barrister of the city; and the entrance of the former into the crowded rooms was greeted with the half-murmured applause that had long heralded her approach wherever she went, for Kate had attained the maturity of twenty-six. She scorned to deny her age (the common foible of weaker minded women who are no longer in their teens) though the closest observer would never have guessed her to be past eighteen. Her simple attire became her as marvellously as it excited the wonder of all who beheld her this evening. Unmarried ladies of the bon ton, counted pretty in their sphere, and all ablaze with jewels, bit their lips with vexation to find that even their diamonds were no offset to the light of Kate's wonderful eyes; and mammas, counting greatly upon the freshness of daughters "just out," were annoyed beyond expression to find the delicate sea-shell pink of Kate's complexion surpassing the fairest of them all, while her manners had the inexplicable charm of perfect cultivation, and wondered audibly "if Kate Alston were *never going to marry.*"

In the meanwhile Kate laughed and chatted and danced with more than her wonted grace and animation to-night. The openly-expressed admiration of Neil Ellmore had sent a proud thrill of joy to her heart. He had known her from the time when she tripped along the streets with her books under her arm, and blushingly hung down her head as strangers passed her, staring perhaps a little rudely at the beautiful face under the plain broad hat. He had been abroad for several years, and returning to find Kate in the increased loveliness of perfect womanhood, had been her almost constant attendant for the past two years.

Yet beyond the general expressions of admiration at which we have hinted he had never told her that he loved her. In the meantime Kate had bravely struggled to keep her own secret through all this trying ordeal; for she had loved him with all her true, noble woman's heart from the time we have mentioned, when strolling from his office, which

was not overrun with business then, he had sometimes carried her books, and listened with a delight he had never experienced since, to her fresh babblings of school life; its hardships, tyrannies, &c.

Men of wealth and position, of manly beauty and intellect, perhaps surpassing Neil Ellmore in each of these, had made honorable offer of their hands and hearts, and been finally rejected, because "she had no love to give in return," she had urged; and her belledom had continued, though the ranks of her admirers had been almost daily increased to the period of which we write. Members of the legislature from the country were declared mad about her; and village or town lions in a small way practised their heretofore irresistible arts without avail. In a quieter manner Neil Ellmore, a thorough man of the world and its ways, was studying the developments of her character as he was doing his own heart with increasing anxiety. He had told her with bitter truth, though he wished her to believe him jesting, that "*He was afraid of her.*" Accustomed as she had been—and as too many of the destined mothers of America's children still are—to an almost culpably indiscriminate attention—to a constant atmosphere of insidious flattery, so often dangerous, nay, *ruinous* to women even much older, and as tenderly raised as herself, he felt that he could by no means count upon the future before her; and he had never seen her when he disapproved of her conduct more entirely than to-night. Neil Ellmore had seen much of the world, as we have said, and believing that he knew men, and women too, pretty well by this time, he had begun to subscribe a rather hearty credence to the old adage, that "whoever knows mankind, must learn to despise them." He had been standing quietly, for some time, in the recess of a bow window, discussing a leading political topic with some of the state officials; but his eyes had followed Kate Alston through lancers, waltzes, and *galops*, in breathless succession, until a look of disgust sat so plainly upon his face, that he abruptly left the ball-room.

When Kate Alston paused, at last, flushed and wearied—she, too, made her escape by another door, and ran up to the dressing-room for her fan, which she had carelessly left there on her arrival. It was some time ere the missing article could be discovered, hid as it was under a mountain of white wrappings, nubias, &c. Even when she had recovered it, and descended again, feeling still fatigued—and finding herself, for a marvel, unobserved—she hurried across the hall into a small reception-room, which she had discovered to be unoccupied; and slipping into the embrasure of a window, found herself, as she desired, almost entirely screened from observation, by the rich lace and damask curtains. She had turned the venetian lattice work, and was suffering the damp night air to riot with dangerous freedom over her sculptured figure—her neck and arms as denuded of drapery as even the modern requirements will allow, when she became aware of voices in conversation upon the portico beyond, and without any intention of eaves-dropping, she found herself instantly becoming painfully interested in the ensuing dialogue:

"I was surprised to hear just now, Ellmore, that you had been speaking to-night of another probable visit to Europe very soon."

"Yes. His Excellency has been mentioning to me some interests of the State that are to be attended to in England, and has kindly offered me the appointment. It tallies with my humor, too, just now; for I find more objects of interest in a general way in the old world; and I have none personal anywhere."

"Not even Miss Osborn?" banteringly queried the voice which Kate strove in vain to recognize; for the other belonged unmistakably to Neil Ellmore. "Or perhaps you design taking her with you?"

"Not even Miss Alston," rejoined Ellmore, with the hard, sneering laugh that sometimes came very cruelly from his lips. "I do not think that even the not very fastidious society of to-day would approve of such a *cicerone* as myself for one of her fashionable belles."

"I alluded, of course, to your taking her as Mrs. Ellmore."

Pshaw! my dear fellow. A man must be much younger than I am, or an irredeemable fool, to marry a *fashionable* beauty who has been in society more than *one* winter, and this is Miss Alston's *seventh*. A season is quite enough to put to rout the best of feeling with which a woman is endowed; and you may judge what they must be after a *seven years' campaign*. If they marry at all after that, it is that they may take your name and money without scruple, to aid them in a yet broader license, if it be possible for them to fall lower than they have already done. And the luckless victim (God help him, whoever he may be) is awakened from his folly to be made aware that with the wedding-ring he has lost even the right of 'love making," while his better half sighs away two-thirds of her worthless existence in the mazes of the disgusting *can can* upon the bosom of another coxcomb, but a whit less stupid than himself. No, no! I agree with one of our greatest living writers, that 'Early marriages are *misery*, imprudent marriages IDOLISM, and marriage at the best—the devil!'"

"And yet," said his companion, laughing, "I would have sworn with the world that you loved her. And I have sometimes fancied that you had told her so."

"Perhaps you are not wrong in either impression," replied Ellmore, in the same tone. "Who is it that is not permitted to tell a pretty woman now-a-days that he loves her? You would be deemed the stupidest of bores else. A wise man might love such a woman against hope and against reason, and yet not give her the fool's right to add the crowning acme of a life-long misery and ruin."

"What do you mean, Ellmore? Some evil genius must possess you. Miss Alston has been much courted, much admired, and much flattered, but I have yet to hear her accused of any gross imprudence."

"Gross imprudence! The deuce, man! Must society wait for any such denouements before it puts its foot on the fatal tendency to corruption prevalent in its midst? I know Miss Alston well, and I grant you that she has held out with a courage worthy of success, but the course she is pursuing has an inevitable tendency *downwards*, and I cannot look on with patience. Have you not seen her to-night—and I take her as a flattering illustration of every other woman present—clasped alternately in the arms of men, married and single? It is said that there must be a difficulty to-morrow between Hilton and Greene, who had some words to-night about claiming her hand for a certain dance. But what is it to her if one or both of their pitiful lives are sacrificed? It will add fresh *eclat* to her belledom. Then—most of all—there is Arthur St. John, a man who, if he had not a wife somewhere among his constituency, ought to know better, for he he *has* high endowments of heart and brain, who was, as you heard, openly bantered in the billiard-room, not an hour ago, about his infatuation for her. He has undoubtedly—and despite his being one of the few *gentlemen* we meet now-a-days—worked himself up into the intensest feeling for her, all brought about by her hollow smiles and allurements; and unable to stand the reproaches of his conscience, he has taken to frequenting gambling hells and drinking saloons, and is going to the mischief generally, as fast as a man ever did. But the subject is reduced *ad nauseam*. Let us go in."

Poor Kate! she had heard every word, with feelings of shame and humiliation impossible to be described. She did not know how long she had been standing thus, with a heart throbbing almost audibly in the bitterness of her anguish, when she felt the curtain lifted at her side, and turning, faced Neil Ellmore, of all the men in the world the last whom she desired to see just now.

"How imprudent!" in an involuntary tone of concern that at another time would have sent a tender thrill to her heart. "I little thought to find you here, as I chanced to look in. You are shivering in this poisonous night air. Are you trying to induce a refined suicide?"

"Don't fancy life has become so distasteful to me yet," she replied, with a scornful laugh; "for, from all accounts, my career of '*belledom*' is by no means over. I do not incline to the ball-room just now, however. I am anxious to see Mr. St. John."

"He is in the next room," said Ellmore, in an icy tone, as he noticed the carnation glow upon her cheeks that he had never seen there before. "Shall I send him to you?"

"If you please."

Another instant, and a tall, manly figure entered the door, and advanced eagerly to her side. The fine face was lit up with unusual animation.

"I have been made happy by the announcement that I might possibly serve Miss Alston. Will she honor me with her commands?"

"Mr. Ellmore threatened to be prosy, so I sent him for you. Will you take me for a few moments to the veranda,—I have something to say to you." He looked at her bare shoulders with an expression that deepened the flush on her cheeks.

"The air is very damp," he said, with a sudden abandon of his native ease and grace. "Might I venture to suggest—a scarf."

"It is no matter," she replied hurriedly. "But I shall not suffer, and I must speak to you now." He bowed in silent admission that her word was a command honoring him far beyond expectation or explanation, and he led her out, thrusting a young man, with an almost Herculean push, down the steps, as he reeled rather near her in the darkness.

"Let us pause here," said Kate, with one arm resting upon the balcony, while her escort placed himself before her, as though to shield her while she spoke from every approach.

"Do you know what the world says of us, Mr. St. John; of you and me?" she asked in a low, thrilling tone.

"The world unites in pronouncing you a brilliant and beautiful woman, Miss Alston," he said sadly. "Of myself it might speak in a manner, that, as I value your opinion, I should not like you to hear."

"Don't suppose it is more charitable to me," she went on excitedly. "Listen, sir. It declares that you are in *love with me*, through my encouragement, and that I am leading you on to ruin. Does it not invest me with singular power?"

"Not more than you wield, Miss Alston" said this incorrigible St. John. "But—forgive me! it *lies* basely if it insinuates that you ever gave encouragement to any man who was not at liberty to confess it before the world. And bold indeed must he be who would affect to parade my feelings before the public, when *my* own lips are silent."

"They say" continued Kate, "that you drink and gamble, and that it is all because of me. Have they charged you falsely with these vices?"

"I am silent, Miss Alston." Arraigned before you as I am to-night, the *truth* is even more powerful than your good opinion, which I would wear as the proudest ornament of my life."

"Pardon me, Mr. St. John," she said more softly. "Though it might grieve me, I have no right to lecture you upon any sin of which you may be guilty, but I stand peculiarly in need of a self-acquitting conscience to-night—you will tell me that I am in no wise, however remotely, the cause of your shortcomings?"

"Miss Alston, may I ask you to spare me? The subject is painfully embarrassing."

"Why so, sir?" she said quickly. "They have not spared *me!*"

"The truth is often harder to bear than slander," said St. John.

"Forgive me, I do not understand you," she returned.

"I do love you in blind forgetfulness of every duty in life," broke from St. John's lips, in such a tone of anguish, that it smote upon her heart, oppressed as it was with its own weight of sorrow.

"My God! And you dare to tell me this!" she exclaimed.

"I would dare all things could it bring me the only recompense I ask—death at your hands. As it will not, my lips are again sealed."

The two stood looking at each other for a moment in silence.

Kate's voice was the first to break the stillness, as she rested her small, jewelled hand, with a strong, nervous grip upon his arm.

"This is not a fit place for a *declaration of love;* and from *you*—yet stay. There is a note of sadness in your voice, akin to something in my own heart, that bids me pause even on so dangerous a ground as the present. Suppose I should call you to the performance of some duty for *my sake*."

"For *your* sake there are few things, this side of eternity, I would not dare."

"Hush! you are impious to-night," she said softly. "It is this I would have you do. Go to your room from here. Attend strictly to your duties in the general assembly for one *week*. Touch neither card nor wine glass for that period, and when it has expired come to me at my own house. Can you promise?"

"Faithfully, yes." He bowed over her small gloved hand, and lifted it reverently to his lips.

"It is enough," she said simply. "Come, let us go in."

CHAPTER II.

"Is it you, Mr. Hilton?" said Kate as they encountered a young man on their way back. "Well met, I was just going in quest of you. Will you wait for me in the room beyond, while I go with Mr. St. John a moment into the ball room?"

Flushed with delight at this novel request Mr. Hilton joyfully complied. He was vaguely speculating as to her motive when she returned on the arm of Mr. Greene.

"Mr. Hilton you were hasty this evening," said Kate in her sweetest voice. "We were each a little wrong I dare say, and you gentlemen will make me very happy by shaking hands with an *entente cordial* in my presence." The two young men eyed each other in anger for a moment, but there was no resisting the pleading of Kate's voice and eyes. The ungloved palms of their right hands met in a hearty clasp.

"Come," continued Kate, smiling up into each of their faces.

"Since you have been so good, I must have an arm of each to go back, and let our enemies see what good friends we are become." Entering the ball room thus, she was soon joined by Ellmore.

"I am at your service whenever you desire to go," he said coldly. "Thank you," she replied in a like key. "I have to dance a set with his excellency. It is time enough when the company generally are dispersing."

An hour later she passed him with an ermine cape about her shoulders "We may as well take the initiative," she said. "There is a tendency to break up." He put her in the carriage, and taking the opposite seat, leaned back in silence until they reached her door. He went up with her, and rang the bell.

"Kate, Kate," he said suddenly in thick accents, "will you be always so cold?" He passed an arm about her, and endeavored to draw her to him, for a good-night kiss, as he had sometimes—(wrongfully, Kate?)—been allowed to do before.

"How *dare* you?" she said, in wrathful pride, turning herself from him. "Mr. Ellmore, I am not quite '*degraded* enough' for that."

"How mean you?" he asked wonderingly, in spite of his anger. "That a simple kiss from *me* would degrade you?"

"*So low!*" said Kate with slow emphasis, "that I should despise myself ever afterwards."

"Then we must of course be as strangers from this time forth. Good-night." He turned abruptly, and strode down to the gate; while she, bounding in at the door, slammed it to with a great bang, and rushed like an angry vision past the drowsy servant in the hall up to her room.

Her mother, finding her the next day at noon in the fitful slumber into which she had just fallen, darkened her windows yet more heavily, and so left her. Neither need we follow her through the bitter communings with her own heart in the week that ensued. Perhaps there may be some parallel in our own lives from which we may form an inference as to what she thought and felt and suffered during that and many more weeks to come.

On the appointed evening, at an early hour, St. John sent in his card at Miss Alston's door, and in a few moments Kate's step was heard in the hall.

"Remember, no more visitors this evening, Charles," she said to the porter. "I shall be engaged," and she came in and stood under the gaslight, as she had done on the night of the never-to-be-forgotten reception, when Neil Ellmore had come for her. She was clad now in a soft, home-like dress of bright colors that nevertheless became her marvellously, as she knew; while St. John was arrayed with the elegance of a courtier in attendance on royalty. He had called on her frequently before, but always with other ladies and gentlemen, and this was the first time he had ever found her alone. Some women are native born and invincible coquettes. It has been said that such, if they could, would be pleased to carry on a decorous sort of flirtation with the man who comes to measure them for a coffin. At any rate we know that it is terribly hard to keep from saying pretty things to a big, handsome fellow when occasion offers.

"I am glad to see you, *Arthur*," said Kate, softly, holding out her hand; and that poet's face of St. John's, with its strong lines of passion, was irradiated with deep joy, as he led her to a seat; and took one himself at a respectful distance in front of her, as she noted; and for which she silently thanked him. "You heard my order to the servant," she continued, in those low dulcet tones of hers, that had already almost been his ruin. "But it is impossible to have a nice strengthening conversation with one's friends, if indifferent parties are by. So I have decided to give you this whole evening, and you must prove your gratitude by being as agreeable as you know how to be."

"Charge me with a double amount of gratitude, if you will," he replied, "but *take the role of agreeable* to yourself. It is your especial prerogative you know. As for me I have been in a continued fever since *I* saw *you;* and have been *mad* with impatience for the expiration of time. But now that I am here, the revulsion comes on me, and I seem to myself to be suddenly in a torpid condition."

"A natural reaction," said Kate. "After your great triumph in the House yesterday; surely it is worth a week's sober thought to achieve a victory like that! Your speech has been the universal theme of conversation since it was delivered. Ada Manning was in the gallery of the House at the time, and declares that she has never seen an audience so enchained. She did not know but that some charge might be brought against you for illegal detention, witchcraft or something of the kind."

"If I have achieved any triumph, it is a part of the gratitude I owe you," said St. John, in a low tone. "I feel no self elation, I have thought of nothing but you; and the approbation of the whole world beside is naught to me."

"That is decidedly *warming* for a 'torpid' man," replied Kate, with a little laugh. "But please remember you have appointed me 'Speaker,' and I shall inevitably call the gentleman to order, if he transgresses parliamentary rules. Seriously, Mr. St. John, I have entertained, since I first saw you, the opinion which the papers of to-day express; that you are one of the rising men of this grand old state. Nay, it would be pseudo deprecation to interrupt me. We all know ourselves enough to *recognize* the higher qualities with which Heaven has endowed us. We are satisfied if the wise use them judiciously. It is, after all, only your man of mediocrity, who makes offensive parade of his learning, and tries to convince the world that he is a Solomon; but *false* humility, on the other hand is sycophantic. Eschew it; it is painfully suggestive of—'Uriah Heep.'"

"Go on," said St. John. "Be my mirror, and show me what I am. I promise to be as clay in your hands. You may breathe into it a new life, for you are 'The ocean to the river of my thoughts.'"

"The chair decides the gentleman to be out of order," said Kate, with a smile. "But to be deeply serious you have been making a 'pretty school-boy' of yourself for some months, instead of the great man you ought and *are* to be. I am rather desperate just now. Give me some nobler aim to live for than I have yet had. Make me proud of my work. You say that you—aye! let us out with it—that you *love* me."

"God knows how hopelessly, and yet how madly!" said St. John, with a trembling lip.

"My friend," replied Kate gravely, "you are a law-maker; but you violate every statute of social and religious equity when you make such a declaration. I might lift up my hands as society may require, and turn from you in seeming horror, but I should be acting a false part, and I am sure no good ever came of that. It may be, after all, the fault of social training, that it comes to me with its deformities so disguised that I experience no disgust; nothing but a bitter heart-burning sorrow. It tells me that there is some flaw in your moral sense, some poison, I trust, but recently imbibed, for which we may find a healing antidote. Let us enter upon a careful analysis."

"Be my good angel, do not banish me altogether, and I will try," said St. John, with painful irresolution.

"Then, as society has induced the evil," said Kate, "we must put on our armor and walk hand in hand awhile, despite its frown. There is a bond of sympathy between us, and to discover it the more clearly there must be a mutual confidence established. Do you consent?"

"I have no option," he replied, huskily. "I am at your mercy. Be as compassionate as your own pure nature will allow."

"Come," said she, "this is downright puerility. It is partly nervous, however, this evening. Mr. St. John, I believe you to be passionate, eager, ardent—if we must define—but I do *not* consider you *weak*."

"Go on," said St. John, looking up resolutely in her face.

"Then, to begin, you must tell me about—*your wife*. Is she ungrateful—unworthy of your love?"

"By heavens! no, though you spurn me as the blackest hearted villain of the age," he replied, chokingly.

"You are truthful—the groundwork of all *grand* characters," continued Kate encouragingly. "Then you cannot even falsely justify yourself by charging *her* with your shortcomings, the poor resort of all *mean* natures! Is it *I*—I ask for information—that have been bold and unmaidenly enough to awaken infidelity in your bosom?"

"Again, no—a thousand times no!" he asserted passionately. "Your goodness and purity are only excelled by your beauty; and they have all drawn me as the flame does the moth—I could not help it!"

"Since you cannot help it, let me be the sun, and be you the eagle. It is a nobler type," said Kate. "You must soar upwards."

"But my wings are burned," he pleaded.

"No! no! you are only dazzled by the light. Have you supposed it possible that I could ever be silly, weak, *wicked* enough to encourage any dishonorable regard?"

"In my maddest moments—no! I swear it, no!"

"*You*, at least, have done me justice," said Kate in a low tone. "Then to return to Mrs. St. John—why is she not with you?"

"Alas!" said St. John with visible emotion. "She has been for a long time so near Heaven, that I have ceased to regard her as belonging to earth.

"For four years, the saddest, the most hopeless of invalids, she has known no other change or motion, than a lifting from one couch to another!"

"Is she patient?" asked Kate softly.

"So patient," said the strong man in a broken voice, "that it wrings my own heart to see her. I was no candidate for office, and when the nomination was tendered me, I asked her permission to decline; but her strong desire for me to accept the honor was so genuine that I dared not refuse her. She is often the greatest sufferer I have ever known. And when these paroxysms assail her, she shuts me resolutely from her room, that I may not be pained by witnessing her agony. Even when it is partly over, and I have pleaded for permission to sit beside her and hold her wasted hand, I see that the finest muscles of her face are under iron control that no spasm of pain may be visible to *me*. And, though I find in my heart not one thought of her as a woman—as a wife—though she seems to me an angel hovering between me and Heaven, I would not have its portal open to admit her—unless to spare her the agony she endures. I would not shorten the frail tenure that binds her to this earth—no, not by one hour, though it should bring me the priceless boon of *your* love as a recompense, for which I would go to my death this evening!" The two sat in the hushed silence for a moment, neither daring to speak.

"Does not the *divine* self-martyrdom of her love teach you a lesson?" asked Kate at length in a low, subdued voice.

"It did until I met you."

"And it must again," said Kate. "It tells you that there are higher objects of pursuit in this life than our own selfish and inordinate desires. It teaches you that even human nature can, by perseverance, be toned down or elevated, until it almost becomes *God-nature*. I know that I do not deserve to be named with the gentle being whom you have described; but do not humiliate me with the thought that I must *undo* all her great work. Make me not of the "dumb driven cattle." Have you not spoken to me of a little child, who will need all your guidance?"

"A daughter, to whose life her mother's was the sacrifice," he said.

"Do not their voices united call you when you go madly with the besotted swine, wrongly called *men*, who haunt the purlieus of darkness and vice in this great city?"

"Ah, spare me!" said St. John; "you make me blush for myself; but their voices are drowned by the music of yours."

"But I go over to them to save you, and we call in harmony," said Kate. "Only you and I must strengthen each other. I have not told you *my* secret yet. Mr. St. John, *I have loved for eight years*, but the object of my affection and I are separated by a greater gulf than divides you and me."

"Ah! my God!" cried St. John, pressing his hand to his heart, "it is hard to hear this from your lips, and yet I have no right to murmur; but it is harder still to believe *you* unhappy; for why should you banish your love?"

"*Because he loves me not in return,*" murmured Kate, with a vivid blush. "But it is not of myself that we have to speak. I am a woman, and it matters not, perhaps. But *you*, Arthur St. John, you have been endowed by Heaven with the leading elements of a great and good man. You have high qualities of heart and brain, and the priceless gift of felicitous *expression*, without which the rough diamond of intellect is a jewel in the mouths of swine. You have elicited the marked attention of the public. Go on pursuing the career which is open before you, and win a name—for you can do it. That will cause Kate Alston to look back to this evening as the proudest moment of her life." She held out her hand to him. He rose and bent over it in an attitude almost of devotion.

"God helping me, I will," he said.

"And God *will* help you, Mr. St. John," replied Kate with enthusiasm. "You are a politician; devote yourself single-minded to the interests of your state and country. Honesty and integrity, allied with intellect, are the crown jewels of any government. Be true to *yourself*, and remember that you are making life beautiful even to me."

"God bless you," he murmured. "If the women of the world were all like you, society would soon be without a reproach." He bent over and touched her brow with his lips in a kiss from which all passion was gone. There was a sound as of a single choking sob, and when Kate Alston looked up she was alone.

There are more ebbs than tides in all good feeling. And the next evening Kate was amongst the votaries of fashion at another large party, seemingly the gayest of the gay.

"Have you heard that Mr. Ellmore starts for England to-morrow?" asked Ada Manning. "What do you mean by letting him go?" He was present, but had not spoken to her during the evening.

"I knew the appointment had been offered him," said Kate slowly, "but not that he had accepted it." Some hours later, as she was lightly uttering unmeaning nothings to half a dozen young men around her, Neil Ellmore abruptly forced his way to her side.

"Miss Alston, the band is about to play a waltz. Will you give it to me in good-by?"

She looked up appealingly and placed her hand in his, and they were soon mingling with the dancers. He spoke no other word, holding her lightly at first; but as the music quickened he drew her closer and closer, until her heart beat against his own, and she could feel its throbbings, like the muffled notes of the drum. A moment more, and he led her dizzy and confused to a seat.

"Miss Kate, this is our *galop*." She looked up, and saw Horace Greene offering his arm. She had no alternative but to take it. Neil Ellmore had already turned away. The next evening she heard that he was gone! And *this* had been his farewell.

Four months had passed away with but little change for Kate. She saw St. John frequently in public, and thanked him for the course he was pursuing. His speeches were published; and the journals spoke of him as the leading power of the state. She had known, as she had told him from the first, that he was no ordinary man—but he seemed to her to have been recently under the very lash and spur of genius. She knew that he possessed an eminently handsome face; but frequently the magical mobility of its expression rendered it an extraordinarily striking one. Though he sometimes assumed a degree of nonchalance, or even lassitude, which the restless disquiet of his eye alone belied, and his ease of manners towards others would sink into effeminacy, or border occasionally upon effrontery, ever and anon she could trace the troubled light that told her his real thoughts were partaking but little of the whims of the hour, or of those levities of fashionable life, over which the grace of his manners could throw such peculiar enchantment. He called on her more than once; but others being by, their conversation was desultory, and he soon left. The legislative session now closed, and he returned to his distant home.

Late hours and dissipation told at last on Kate, and she fell sick. It was during her convalescence that the mail brought her the following:

"I learn, through a friend, that you are ill. May God spare you, for the good you have done. You are seldom absent from my thoughts even here. As I sit by a couch of suffering, with my child upon my knee, witnessing the last agonies of a spirit that must soon rise in oblivion of the ills that we may remain heir to, I sometimes wish that I could think of you as less good and pure, and worthy of all noble resolves than you are; for *then* I should forget you. But again I reflect that Fate ordains your influence shall still be exerted to strengthen me in my hours of trial.

"ST. JOHN."

The note was bedewed with tears as Kate laid it away in her desk. It was some weeks before she had entirely recovered—and in the meantime she learned that Neil Ellmore had returned. The first time she went out, he passed her on the street with a formal bow. He was on his way to his office—where he found the following, amongst his letters:

"April 14, 18—

"DEAR SIR:—I learn that you are again in your native State and town. I believe you will not refuse when I ask you to come to me on a matter of the utmost interest to us both. My wife is *dying*, or I might have spared *you* the journey. ARTHUR ST. JOHN."

Neil Ellmore, wondering greatly, but too courteous, under the circumstances, to refuse, left the city by the next train. We do not presume to follow him. He had returned by the third evening. For as Kate Alston sat in her own parlor, surrounded by a number of her gay friends, Neil Ellmore entered, a little pale, but with a resolute step. Salutations over, he turned to Kate.

"Miss Alston, can I see you a moment alone? I have a message for you, from a friend."

"Will not the message wait?" she asked coolly, striking the keys of the piano. "While I play for a cotillion?"

"I think not," he replied, looking down in her beautiful face.

"Ada Manning!" Kate called, "take my place for a moment, while I give Mr. Ellmore a hearing." "Come, sir, by moonlight, to the veranda. The rooms are oppressive." She threw up the sash of the oriel window, and stepped out with a laugh. She had walked a few steps when Neil Ellmore caught her in his arms.

"Kate, my *darling!* it is best here, where we parted in anger. "The message is from Arthur St. John. His wife is dead, and he bids me ask you to be mine."

As they returned, no one would ever have supposed what had passed, for their faces were serene with a perfect content. The next and last fashionable gathering that Kate attended was her *own wedding*.

A few years have passed, and Arthur St. John has risen from the State to the National legislature. He is again a married man.

"What a superb woman your old friend, Mrs. Ellmore, is!" said his wife one evening as they sat alone together.

"And she is as good as she is pretty," replied St. John, with a thoughtful smile, as he kissed his fair young wife. But he wisely forbore to awaken her jealousy by telling her how great an influence Kate Ellmore had wielded over his own destiny!

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Bergh intends to arrest all persons in the city who bottle catsup.

☞ How to make a slow horse fast—Don't feed him.

☞ The Coming Man—Jack Frost.

☞ A paper that takes—A sheriff's warrant.

☞ Counter attractions—Handsome clerks.

☞ Nilsson practices five hours a day.

☞ A boy who had read of sailors heaving up anchors, wanted to know if it was seasickness that made them do it.

☞ The Williams Review opposes the admission of girls into college, but says if they are determined to come, the students of that college will "welcome them with open arms."

☞ "Schoolmistress:—"Johnny, I'm ashamed of you! When I was your age I could read as well as I do now." Johnny: "Aw! but you'd a different taycher to wot we'm got."

☞ A locomotive at Dawson, Georgia, recently grazed a woman and took one of her ears off.

☞ Since the papers told of that girl who got married by washing a child's face in the street, all the sensible girls carry towels with them.

☞ A California milkman is said to have left a can of water by mistake at a customer's house, and the customer never discovered the error.

☞ A physician has discovered that the nightmare, in nine cases out of ten, is produced from owing a bill to the printer.

☞ The New York World says "stag parties" are entertainments whereat bucks usually get enough additional horns to make them stagger.

☞ "Do you understand me *now?*" thundered a country pedagogue to an urchin, at whose head he threw an inkstand. "I've got an ink-ling of what you mean."

☞ The editor of the New York Commercial says he read it just forty-seven times in forty-eight hours that "Chicago will arise like a phœnix from the ashes." If any writer uses the phrase again, the editor hopes "the fire-proof bird will drop a few hot cinders on the head of the man who does it."

☞ A sentimental young man thus feelingly expresses himself: "Even as nature benevolently guards the rose with thorns, so does she endow women with pins."

☞ G. A. Townsend says seven of Brigham Young's wives are the prettiest women in America.

☞ One of Nilsson's most admired notes—The one thousand-dollar one she sent to Chicago.

☞ A correspondent of the New York Commercial speaks of a church on the Fifth avenue where they have "four expensive brass angels outside, and a good many expensive angels inside."

"Sir," said Dr. Johnson, "it is a shame to speak ill of a man behind his back; but I think the gentleman who has just left the room is—an attorney."

☞ A son of Rev. Robert Collyer, of Chicago, was to have been married on the Monday night of the fire. After hunting a justice for two days through the burning city, the marriage notice of the courageous couple was the first which appeared in the revived Tribune.

☞ "Off she goes!" said a lady, speaking of the train as it was starting. "You have mistaken the gender," said a gentleman; "this is the mail train."

☞ New Orleans girls complain that the young men "don't tease them enough."

☞ A Philadelphian who invested last year $100 in Christmas presents to fai friends, received $7 worth of pen wipers and pulse warmers in return.

PROSPECTUS FOR 1872.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

REDUCTION OF PRICE!

SPLENDID STORIES.

The publishers of THE LADY'S FRIEND have concluded to reduce its price to single subscribers from $3.50 to $3—the prices to Clubs (already very low) remaining the same.

They shall continue to obtain for their readers the very best novelets, stories, poetry, etc., that can be procured, including articles from the gifted pens of Miss Amanda M. Douglas, Miss A. L. Muzzey, Daisy Ventnor, August Bell, Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, A. M. Dana, Madge Carroll, Emma B. Ripley, Nora Perry, M. C. Pyle, Ida Rowland, etc., etc., etc.

The following novelets, with the usual variety of short stories, are announced for 1872:

UNA AND HER LIONS,
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "One Woman's Experience," "Jealousy," etc.

QUEEN COQUETTA.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Prince Charming, etc., etc.

ONLY A WISH.
By A. M. DANA, author of "Jarring Chords, etc., etc.

MISSION WORK.
By Mrs. MARGARET HOSMER, author of "A Turn in Fortune's Wheel," etc., etc.

AN EVERY-DAY HEROINE.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "Solid Silver," "A Little Money," etc.

ENGRAVINGS!

The Engravings of THE LADY'S FRIEND are of a very superior character. They embrace beautiful pictures of subjects which touch the sentiments and affections, illustrations of our Novelets and Stories, illustrations of the Fashions, (including cuts from which patterns for almost everything can be ordered at a low price,) illustrations of Ladies' Fancy work, etc.

MUSIC.

A piece of the latest and most fashionable Music accompanies every number. The Music is of itself worth the price of the magazine.

The Most Refined, Beautiful, and Interesting of the Magazines!

In short, THE LADY'S FRIEND aims to be, and its proprietors think it is, the most refined, Beautiful, and Interesting of the Magazines—*being in Cover, Engravings, and Contents just what a lady's magazine should be.*

TERMS—Always in Advance.

One Copy, - - - - - $2.00.
1 Copy of the Lady's Friend ($2) and 1 of The Saturday Evening Post ($2.50), for $4.00.

[Our *club* terms are the same as those of that old and popular paper, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST—in order that the clubs may be made up of the magazine and paper conjointly when so desired.]

☞ The magazines or papers in a club will be sent to different Post-offices, if desired.

☞ The contents of THE LADY'S FRIEND and of THE POST will always be entirely different.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twelve cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, *payable to our order.*

Address DEACON & PETERSON,
319 *Walnut Street, Philadelphia.*

Single Numbers 20 Cts. Specimen Copies (not current numbers) 15 Cts.

R. R. R.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

Cures the worst pains in from one to twenty minutes. Not one hour after reading this advertisement need any one suffer with pain. **Radway's Ready Relief** is a cure for every pain. It was the first and is the only pain remedy that instantly stops the most excruciating Pains, allays Inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels, or other glands or organs, by one application, in from one to twenty minutes, no matter how violent or excruciating the pain, the Rheumatic, Bed-ridden, Infirm, Crippled, Nervous, Neuralgic, or prostrated with disease, may suffer. Price 50 cents.

DR. RADWAY'S
Perfect Purgative Pills.

Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated, for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Bilious Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements, of the Internal Viscera. Warranted to effect a Positive Cure.

Price 25 cents per box. Sold by Druggists.

DR. RADWAY & CO.,
ap22-tf 87 Maiden Lane, New York.

Be Guided by what you Know.

There is an old proverb which says, "Experience is the safest guide." To this guide the sick and ailing naturally turn when casting about for the means of relief. They inquire what a medicine has done for others, before they adopt it themselves. Of all the remedies and preventives in use, HOSTETTER'S STOMACH BITTERS meets the test most triumphantly, and hence its immense popularity and vast sales. The sufferer from indigestion is sure to find some one among his friends who has been cured of this ailment by the famous vegetable stomachic. The victim of fever and ague, liver complaint, constipation, nervous prostration, or general debility, has only to make inquiry in the neighborhood where he resides in order to discover what this standard restorative has effected in cases similar to his own. In the published testimony to its merits he will find a volume of proofs of its sanitary properties, which it is impossible for his common sense to resist. He tries it, and the effect it produces on his system adds another to the host of witnesses in its favor. Thus, its reputation, founded on facts, not assertions, continually grows and spreads. Charlatans and impostors, some of them mere local tricksters, and others who take a somewhat wider range, attempt to thrust into the hands and down the throats of invalids, their haphazard concoctions, as substitutes for the tonic which for so many years has been a medicinal staple throughout the United States, Spanish America, Canada, and the West Indies, but only succeed to a very limited extent. In this reasoning age, the people, having ascertained what is really deserving of their confidence, decline "running after strange gods."

nov4-1m

DR. S. S. FITCH

sends his "**Family Physician**" 90 pages, free by mail to any one. This book is to make any one their own doctor. Remedies are given for Thirty Diseases, which each person can prepare.

Send your direction to Dr. S. S. FITCH SON, 714 Broadway, New York. may.3-1y

Sweet Sixteen.—If you wish to look young, as well as beautiful, use HAGAN'S MAGNOLIA BALM upon your face, neck and hands, and LYON'S CELEBRATED KATHAIRON upon your hair. The Balm makes your complexion natural, transparent and lively. It removes Freckles, Pimples, Moth-patches, &c., and instead of a red rustic face, you have the marble purity of a city belle. It gives to middle age the bloom of youth. Add to this a luxuriant head of hair, produced by Lyon's Kathairon, and a lady has done her happiest thing in the way of adornment. It is the best Dressing in the world, and prevents the hair from falling out and turning gray. Sold by all Druggists.

sep16-9t

"**Barnett's Cocoaine** for the hair, once used, recommends itself."—*Christian Freeman, Boston.*

☞ What did that young lady mean when she said to her lover: "You may be too late for the cars, but you can take a hors?"

☞ The French journals say that the Parisians are jubilant over the late discovery of Dr. Bernsie for the relief of red noses. By means of electricity he has restored a lady of rank to happiness, and changed her nose, a blooming rose, into a delicate lily.

OUR NEW DEPARTURE!

THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

HALF A CENTURY OLD.

ENTIRELY NEUTRAL IN POLITICS

That well-known literary weekly, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, having just completed its half-a-century of existence, has resolved to celebrate the event by

A NEW DEPARTURE.

The size of THE POST has therefore been enlarged fully ONE-THIRD, (containing 48 long columns,) and it is now both the

Largest and Cheapest of the Family Papers!

It will contain Novelets, Illustrated Stories, Sketches, Poetry, Answers to Correspondents, etc., etc., by the

ABLEST WRITERS

that can be procured—including Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "East Lynne," Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, Amanda M. Douglas, Burr Thornbury, Ella Wheeler, August Bell, Clio Stanley, Captain Carnes, Lillie Devereux Blake, "Zig," Mrs. Fanny R. Feudge, Mrs. M. L. S. Burke, Eben E. Rexford, etc., etc., etc. ☞ It will be entirely NEUTRAL in politics.

NEW NOVELETS CONSTANTLY PUBLISHED.

New Novelets and Stories, long and short, are being continually published. Subscriptions, therefore, can begin at almost any time.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

As our enlarged paper will afford us the room, we shall devote about a column in every number to a summary of the most important and interesting news of the week.

TERMS—Always in Advance.

One Copy, - - - $2.50.

One Copy of the Saturday Evening Post ($2.50) and One of the Lady's Friend ($2,00), for $4.00.

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Address H. PETERSON & CO.,

319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

SINGLE COPIES 6 Cents.

☞ The following notice is stuck up on a bridge at Denver, in Colorado: "No vehicle drawn by more than one animal is allowed to cross this bridge in opposite directions at the same time." This is concise and comprehensible. We should be inclined to append to it, "This notice, drawn up by more than a donkey, is to be pasted up at both ends of the bridge simultaneously at different times."

THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, NOV. 4, 1871

NEW ARRANGEMENTS.

Our lady readers will notice that we have made arrangements for a weekly article upon

THE CITY FASHIONS,

from the very competent pen of Olive King. To lady readers, especially those living in the country, this will prove, we think, a very welcome addition to the paper.

We also hear from "Zig"—"Zig," the sprightly and spirited—that she designs sending THE POST her contributions weekly, as soon as she can get things into proper train. She says:—"So you can announce me as looking forward to be a weekly or *weakly* contributor, till you are tired of me, or I run out of anything to say."

Our readers will see by these movements that we are omitting nothing that we think will add to the interest of our paper. Of course we are also adding heavily to our expenses; but we trust to be repaid by a large increase of our subscription list. For THE POST now is not only the *largest*, but the *cheapest* of the first-class family papers, and we think the great masses of the reading public can hardly fail soon to find that fact out.

DEATH OF SUMMER.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MABEL PERCY.

The beautiful, flower-crowned Summer is dead. Gone is the queen that reigned over the land, filling it with warmth and gladness. Her green dwelling was filled with flowers; among them the butterfly and the humming-bird roamed, and the birds tuned all the air to melody.

But a cold breath came from the North and chilled her delicate frame. She shivered and drew her garments more closely about her. Soon she grew weaker, but her cheeks had become a beautiful crimson, and she thought it betokened returning health. But the brook saw more clearly and babbled to the trees, and the trees whispered to the sky that their beautiful mistress was dying.

She hoped to loiter hand in hand with Autumn, and to divide her sceptre with her brilliant sister; so she donned a russet cloak, while Autumn wove into her dress threads of green, which made her scarlet and orange robe even more beautiful. They roamed over the fields together—and mortals marvelled to see the earth so lovely. They did not know that these charming sisters each carried a shuttle wound with her favorite color, and wove in and out amidst the sunshine gorgeous webs wherewith to deck the landscape.

But soon Summer grew tired, and said she must repose; so Autumn made a beautiful couch for her to recline upon, and then left her—for she had not finished decking the fields; but Summer rested until one beautiful day, when she arose and went abroad. How everything rejoiced! The Sun stooped to kiss her brow—and the Wind whispered lovingly in her ear; the robins and swallows twittered for joy; and the poor, faded flowers tried to look gay in their tattered dresses. But Summer felt sad, for she had seen her face in the brook as she came, and saw that she was fading like her flowers. She stooped over them, and from her blue eyes came pearly drops as she gathered them to her bosom. Then she sank down never to rise again; and she did not sorrow, for life was no longer joyous. The birds that had sung to her, were flown to her rival over the sea; her delicate green dress that Spring had given her, woven and colored with her own fair hands, was soiled and discolored; and the cloak Autumn gave, looked too gaudy to suit the fastidious Summer. The Wind saw that she was dying, and he sighed and trembled, for he loved the beautiful Summer and always treated her tenderly, though he had been boisterous to Winter and changeable to Spring. And now he blew gently in her face and kissed her lips, striving to woo her back to life. She opened her eyes for a moment and the Wind danced for joy, the flowers looked brighter, and the little brooks laughed and chattered as they flowed to join the brimming river. But she told her lover that she could not live, and asked him to woo Autumn for a mate. He only moaned and trembled, fanning her gently the while. When she died, a shiver ran through the Earth, and a grayness crept over the face of Nature. The Wind buried her beneath a canopy of scarlet and gold that the trees gave him; the birds that had remained chanted a requiem over her grave; and the Sun pronounced a benediction of returning life. There she will slumber until the gorgeous Autumn, the ermine-covered but warm-hearted Winter, the coquettish Spring are all sleeping; then she will arise and strew flowers over their graves, call back her birds from over the sea, and go forth in her beautiful green garments, mistress of the Earth again.

TIGHT LACING.

BY AN ENGLISH LADY.

I would trespass on your kindness—if you deem them worthy—to insert a few lines on the subject of tight-lacing, accruing from my own experience. Up to the age of thirteen I had known of no other stays than those worn from my earliest childhood, and when the subject of a thorough corset was mooted by my stepmother to my sisters on my behalf, I loudly protested against it, stoutly affirming that if the said corset were purchased I would not wear it. In vain did they argue that I must, or I should be no figure at all; finding me quite determined they at last appealed to my papa to insist on my obedience, instead of which he called me to him and kindly asked me what objection I had to make, to which question I replied I felt stifled when so bound, and that anything of a stiffer nature than that which I had already worn I was sure I could not bear. He therefore said as I was a slight figure he scarcely saw the necessity for my wearing a corset himself. I was then nineteen inches round the waist. Four years passed, at the end of which time I had attained the age of seventeen, when, on an occasion of myself and sisters having new dresses, it had ever been a custom with us from childhood on having tried them on to run down-stairs to papa for his approval, and to kiss him for the pretty present. When we stood round him he looked first at my elder sister, then at me, and said at once, 'Yours, Fan, is a total failure; Ellie's will do. Why, you are no figure, somehow,' he said, again turning to my sister. 'How is it?' and then, as if some thought suddenly struck him, he turned half-angrily to me and said, 'You are not laced tight, I hope?' At which I laughed heartily, and felt, I must own, not a little triumphant as I said, 'You forget, papa, I do not wear any corset at all;' and added, 'my dress fits my figure, that of my sister's her corset.' He said, 'Then the sooner you follow Ellie's example, Fan, the sooner you will be able to lay claim to being as pretty a figure as need be seen, if yours will in any way compete with hers.' Time wore on, and I became engaged; one day, while walking along the street, I was overtaken by the gentleman whom I now proudly call my husband. He greeted me with the words, 'It is you; I could have sworn it.' On my asking, 'Why?' I was told, 'No one could mistake those shoulders, or the elegant walk, who had once seen them, as so few young ladies now-a-days know how to walk properly.' My readers will ask, perhaps, what this has to do with my subject? I will add, simply to show that not from vanity do I insert this, but to let it be seen that through a thorough course of drilling when at school, and that alone, I had acquired easy, graceful movements, which in time became habitual to me; and that no corset was required either to keep me upright or to prevent that habit of lolling which I have heard it argued that every girl has who does not wear a vice, as I am pleased to term those articles of dress. I was educated by the wife of a surgeon, who was as strongly opposed to lacing as myself; I have also heard the surgeon who has always attended our family speak in strong terms against what he called stays. My father-in-law, who is a surgeon, avers that they are most pernicious to the health when worn so tight; and a far sadder testimony I can bring forward as the baneful effects of tight-lacing than many. When quite young myself I went to a school where there was a young lady whose education was just finished, but being a general favorite she was always asked by our principal to join us at our breaking-up, when we had a full-dress party. On the occasion to which I refer, the young lady came, and, as I afterwards heard, on alighting from her carriage she actually winced with pain, owing to her feet being squeezed into boots far too small for her; but what was worse her corset was just as bad, and even her gloves could not be removed. I well remember asking her to be my partner in the next quadrille, to which she readily assented; but ere half the dance had proceeded she was forced to procure me another partner and retire herself to sit down, in which position she remained during the remainder of the evening. She was going to a large private ball in a month's time, but alas! to that ball she never went. In a week or two we heard she was very ill, and ere long she was totally paralysed, entirely owing to the folly, it was said, of not only lacing too tight, but that of sleeping in her corset and tight gloves. She possessed great wealth, and though her friends would gladly have sacrificed everything to see her restored to her former health, every effort failed. Do not think this an exaggeration; it is true, for it made so deep an impression on my young and sensitive mind that I determined to take the course I have ever since pursued. Added to these arguments I would ask a question. Do those ladies who pride themselves on their waists (of nineteen inches, for example) mean to say that, were they asked to sing a song, they could give full, rich, clear chest notes? If so, I must decline to believe it; for instance, in the case of a rapid passage or a sustained note the chest and lungs must be fully expanded. How can that be done when the body is so cramped? It is simply impossible; for I speak from experience, having been gifted by nature with a fine voice, and it having been cultivated by a master of no mean talents. I am certain had I not had perfect freedom in taking breath, I could not have held it during the time I have often done on a long-sustained note. Again I would ask, is it merely for the gratification of attracting the admiration or flattery of the opposite sex that our ladies of to-day resort to the odious practice of tight-lacing and raising the heels of their boots? Surely not! They cannot have become so utterly lost to all sense of what is due to themselves as to make that the one aim and height of their ambition. Can it be that there are none left of that good old school of which I am proud to class my dear mother as one among the many, who was renowned far and near for her beauty, but, above all, her modesty? I trust not; let us hope they are the exceptions, not the rule, and long may it be ere the connection is wrenched from us. In conclusion, I would add I have now arrived at the age of seven-and-twenty, being a wife and mother, and my waist is only one-and-twenty inches, not any too large to look well, and sparing that very angular appearance which tight-lacers always have. I have also heard many gentlemen say that they strongly object to wooden dolls for partners in a dance, as those seem who are so tightly encased.

GOSSIP FOR LADIES.

THE CITY FASHIONS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST:—In looking around through the world of Fashion, one sees so many more things than were ever dreamt of in any philosophy since the time of Shakspeare, that it is a little difficult to know what is and what is not most important to talk about. Dress-goods, suits, and wraps, were discussed in my last, I believe, and yet so many novelties are all the time being brought out, that one might almost confine themselves to a weekly dissertation upon the same articles without danger of becoming tiresome or of allowing history to repeat itself.

The cool weather and chilling winds of the last few days have had the effect of bringing out velvet and cloth cloaks a little earlier than they are usually seen, and has given, also, a little impetus to the trade in

FURS,

which promises to be brisk—the dealers assure us—for the balance of the season.

In prices, furs do not vary much from those of last year, but are, if anything, a trifle cheaper. The increase in the demand over that of past seasons, I cannot account for; though it is just possible that it having been a remarkably dry summer in some parts of the country, and an unusually wet one in other portions—moths may have been very plenty and ladies very careless, and muffs, and tippets, and boas, and capes have suffered accordingly. If any one can advance a more logical reason, it will be accepted, and a liberal discount allowed.

SEAL AND ASTRACHAN CLOAKS

bid fair to be more fashionable than ever the coming winter, and all who are not provided are bustling around comparing notes, and inspecting these goods wherever they may be found. There is something pretty and gratifying in the trying on of graceful garments, and ladies like to watch the process and see how the thing fits; but this trying on of a big, burdensome Astrachan cloak is a business at once "flat, stale and unprofitable."

In the first place they are clumsy and ugly, and in the second place they never did and never were invented to fit anybody, and are without exception the most ungraceful garment ever intended for ladies' wear. The only merit they have is their *warmth*, and even that is accompanied by such a weight that the wearer is always looking for an opportunity to doff the thing, content to shiver rather than be so encumbered. That they are *fashionable* nobody can deny, and that in bundling up for a sleigh-ride they are comfortable is another undisputed fact; but in point of elegance one might as well be a big Newfoundland dog and have done with it. There is, to be sure, a great choice in these garments, the finer and more expensive ones looking a little better than the heavy coarse-haired things usually worn, and which need to be more tenderly handled than they have been by me, if the possessor does not wish to see them falling to pieces before her eyes, it being universally conceded that they are not at all durable, but tear without the slightest provocation at most unfortunate times and in the most conspicuous places. As for the *seal-skin* cloak, I have no word to say against it. It is stylish, elegant and expensive; three excellent reasons why it should be popular. It is of course, owing to its shape and thickness, better adapted to tall figures, but then it looks well on anybody, and the shortest woman in all Christendom would be flying in the face of her own comfort to reject one if sent to her by express with the charges paid.

As a rule they are more admired than the Astrachan, and will doubtless supercede them among *elegantes*, as the Astrachan is already so common, that it must soon be banished from select circles.

MUFFS AND BOAS

in all the new styles have been on exhibition for some weeks, and very many have already made purchases, under the impression that they could be procured at a lower price now than later. In this they are a little at fault; the prices asked at the beginning of the season vary little until after the holidays; then, if there be a large stock on hand, dealers prefer to dispose of the goods at a trifling discount, rather than take the risk and trouble of keeping them over.

The Russian and Hudson Bay sables are the most expensive furs used in muffs, and have about them an air of the greatest respectability and decorum; which arises from the fact of their use being confined to wealthy dowagers who long ago forgot the follies and frivolities of youth—if, indeed, they were ever young—and who now setting themselves up in their great wisdom and virtue, are at once the terror and the admiration of the more indiscreet and thoughtless. And while it must be "mighty uncomfortable" to be a model of propriety, to be always in position, and always on guard lest some word not duly weighed escape the lips, or a sudden gesture betray an impulse, there is doubtless a great satisfaction in being placed upon a pedestal, and gazed at with looks of awe and wonder. The surging, rushing, laughing multitude like to see "perfect propriety," because it is so rare, but to the command, "go and do thou likewise," they shake their giddy heads and speed away; while the model looks down upon the pleasure-seeking throng, settles herself in her sables, and congratulates herself that fate and fortune have placed her where "Slander, whose edge is sharper than the sword; whose tongue outvenoms all the worms of Nile," can never come.

For ordinary use "Mink" is most popular, and is worn by old, young and middle-aged. Sixty dollars will purchase a fair set, and common ones can be procured as low as forty dollars, while very elegant sets consisting of muff and boa, are any where from one hundred and twenty, to one hundred and fifty dollars. For evening and carriage wear, ermine and white fox are best liked; fifty dollars will purchase a handsome set of either.

The new fur euphoneously styled black marten, or rose marten, but which is in fact, not to put too fine a point upon it, the skin of the American skunk, is seen in the windows of the great fur establishments, and will, it is thought find as great a favor this season as last. It is a pretty fur, much resembling sable, flowing silky, and beautiful, and answers admirably so long as the wearer remains in the open air. In lecture-rooms, or crowded assemblies the odor arising from it is quite too pungent for sensitive olfactories, and is even denounced by the most devoted lovers of musk, for:

"You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will,
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still."

In the fashioning of furs there is not much change from last year; the muffs are a trifle smaller, and the boa will be worn to the entire exclusion of the little collarine; satin linings for muffs are not liked, and silk will again rule. Corals and tassels are used in the trimming of muffs, but "tips" are thought more elegant—probably for the reason that the idea is newer.

Muffs of the material of the costume it is said will be much worn, but it is more than probable that this fashion will be confined to those who cannot afford fur, as there is no substitute that ever can to any extent take its place. For the trimming of velvet cloaks, and fine cloth ones as well, fur will be much in demand. Chinchilla, otter and black marten will be the kinds selected. The trimming of cloaks and suits with fur does not add materially to their warmth, but they look comfortable, and appearance is something.

HOOP SKIRTS

have taken a new lease of life. Again there is a skeleton in every closet, and the suits and dresses that for the last two years have gone about in such a melancholy disheartened way, looking for all the world as though they were ashamed of themselves, are now brightening up in quite a merry and satisfied manner. It did seem a waste of labor to bestow such care upon the skirts of dresses, cover them as it were with ruffles and puffs, and then leave them to fall in a confused and tumbled mass. Ladies discovered the fact after the novelty of changing garments were off, and those who had seen their last hoop disappear in the ash barrel, thoughtless, alike, of the close relation it had borne, and the tender memories that might even yet be thrilling along its wires, started out in quest of new ones over which to spread their dainty flounces that they might thus confront the sun of Heaven and the sons of men to more advantage. Home dresses will do very well without hoops—but to show a street suit they are a necessity. For "little women" it does not matter quite so much—though for the promenade a small hoop gives a more graceful sweep to the garments; but a tall, hoopless figure is a wierd, uncanny sight—and though "men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them," it was not for love of one of those ungainly animals—*angels*, I mean.

BOOTS AND SHOES

are an important item with all ladies who can boast of any standing in society. A pretty boot goes far toward making a pretty foot—and the latest freak is the padding of the instep. There is no secret about it either, Fashion, the usually shy old jade, comes out flat-footed and boldly declares that rubber "springs," for those who are so unfortunate as not to possess the royal arched instep, can be had at any anatomical boot maker's, (they have those fellows now-a-days,) and boots and shoes of any description will be fitted over them in such a manner as to deceive the most practiced eye.

What a thing is invention!

How grandly Art soars over Nature, and snaps its fingers in her motherly old face!

"If your foot is pretty, show it," will hereafter meet with a more general appreciation; though why something of this kind was not thought of when short skirts were in vogue, and tilting hoops were at their height, I am sure I don't know.

It seems to me the fashion of high insteps comes too late in the day—for with the long skirts now worn, an occasional glimpse of a tiny foot is all that is vouchsafed the patient watcher.

OLIVE KING.

THE TIME WILL COME.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY E. L.

Wait and hope! How much is contained in those words. How many people wait when they see plank after plank slip slowly but surely from under their tired feet. Then one by one their hopes are destroyed, and their false friends turn indifferently away from them in their hour of need. Still, with unconquerable spirits they wait for better days. Trusting with unfailing trust that those days will come. And they will.

Oh, poor pilgrims in life's dreary waste, have courage! Fight life's battle with brave, strong hearts, and when the end comes you will find peace. Is it not better, when we are nearing the "shadowy vale," waiting for the reaper to close our eyes for our last long sleep, to feel that we tried to be true, and that if there was sin committed it was not our sin? This side of the hill we must climb is dark and rough, and as we look about us our dimmed eyes can see no glimmer of light, no smooth place for our weary feet; but if we only would trust Him a little longer—only had the faith to tread the path before us with patience and endurance, on the other side we should find rest.

It is hard to give up hopes dearer to us than life; hard to say, while lips quiver and hearts seem breaking, "Thy will be done;" and yet the cross, though it is heavy, may be in mercy sent; and in spirit as well as in life, God may be teaching His eternal love.

[From the Dover, N. H., *Gazette*, Oct. 12, 1871.]

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, published by H. Peterson & Co., Philadelphia, comes out this week enlarged, and in new dress. It is and always has been a first-class story paper, and is eagerly looked for and welcomed in our family.

[From the Metropolis, Ill., *Journal*, Oct. 12, 1871.]

A good literary paper is a source of intense pleasure in every family. From the youngest reader to the gray-haired dame and sire, all—all enjoy it. Then how important to exercise prudence in making a selection from the vast numbers of journals that fill the country! We would recommend THE SATURDAY EVENING POST. It is old, reliable, moral, and in every way suited for home and fireside reading. Price $2.50 per year, in advance. Address Henry Peterson & Co., publishers, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

[From the Philadelphia *Ledger*, Oct. 28, 1871.]

THE PHILADELPHIA SATURDAY EVENING POST, one of the oldest weekly newspapers in the United States, celebrated its fifty-first year by an enlargement and a new suit of type. It is as fresh and vigorous as ever, and enjoys an excellent reputation and a good circulation.

[From the Philadelphia *Sunday Republic*, Oct. 29, 1871.]

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST celebrates its fifty-first year by an enlargement and a new suit of type. The veteran, although compelled to compete with many youthful rivals, is not surpassed in vigor and freshness.

☞ One of the many curious combinations of firm names in New York city is seen in a prominent sign on Grand street—that of Bearup & Carraher.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MARIE S. LADD.

"You remember Mrs. Weaver, who was so much admired, a few years ago, in Bristol. It was said she had made a splendid match. She has separated from her husband. I have just returned from Brunswick, from a visit to the Gordons. They, too, live apart, though residing in the same house; neither of them will bear the stigma of an open separation. Our friends the Forsyths, middle-aged people though they are, within the past year have decided that they cannot live longer together. So it is. Complicated and delicate in its arrangements, you often find examples of the marriage state where all does not work smoothly. And what wonder? Two people decide to live together in the closest relation all the years of their lives, without taking into account their separate individuality, which, unless remembered, will keep up continual friction in one way or another, stirring up antagonism and separateness of existence.

"It is not true marriage. Bating exceptional cases of real affinity and consequent harmony, I am convinced that the people who get along well together either lack sensitiveness, or they must have taken all the difficulties into consideration and met them with real wisdom."

These quotations are from Aunt Cinda's letter, in answer to a troubled one from her niece.

Two years before, Lucy Reyne had entered into marriage with Paul Dean, in some respects as one would form a business co-partnership. She was to have all of her rights, she promised. It is true she said this with a pretty toss of her head that looked very charming to Paul, but she meant every bit of it. She had always had her way, and that was what she called having her rights. It was easy enough promising to such a bright-faced woman as Lucy, not knowing all the promise must cover, so Paul said that none of her rights should be infringed on.

Well, they were married, and went to housekeeping in the cosiest way, and for the first few months were as happy as happy could be. But at last something went wrong.

One Friday night Lucy told her husband she was going home to Bristol, and asked him to come down Saturday night, and they would both return Monday on the morning train. He promised in good faith, but Saturday night he thought himself unusually tired, and without considering that his wife would be anxiously watching for him, he concluded not to go. Sunday was a blue day with him. He felt punished, and thought he would tell Lucy so when she came home.

He met her at the station, glad to see her, but when she learned that nothing of a serious nature had detained him, and that she had suffered unnecessary alarm, she was filled with indignation.

This was the first infringement of Lucy's rights. This first disappointment obtruded itself on all occasions. She could not surmount that mountain, consequently other elevations continually succeeded. A single peep into this loom would have been sufficient. The carpet was certainly wrong side out.

Some tradition says that the thread that drew the angels from Paradise into evil was, at first, as fine as a cobweb, but they did not resist it, and it grew as strong as a cable.

These were not bad-hearted young people that I have introduced to your notice. Their education had been faulty, and they had entered into a compact which they had thought was to be carried out on a sunshiny and always pleasant road. They had made no allowance for clouds, or an occasional dampening shower, so each fastened themselves to a rigid platform, which their uncompromising natures had built under them. In her dilemma, Lucy wrote to Aunt Cinda for advice. How she replied I have already told you, but it was all Hebrew to Lucy. "It might be very fine theory, but, dear me, how was a mortal to put it into practice, especially with injustice and injured feelings to contend with?"

They had not begun right. Neither could concede that the other was injured, and so the tangle could not be made straight.

Paul proposed separation; he thought it was sinful to go on in the way they were living. Lucy had to suffer a great deal before she would consent to this. She waited to see if things would not get into a better state. But they were to come into this improved condition without any yielding on either part. "A little endured, a little tolerated as a foible, and lo, the jagged atoms fit like smooth mosaic." But there was no concession here.

Lucy at last went home, feeling that there was no chance for happiness, now, in the wide world. She had been defrauded. Paul was the ruthless man who had taken the bread of life from her lips, and left her starving.

Paul felt dissatisfied and broken up. At night, inexpressible weariness came over him, and he often longed for the light, soft fingers at his temples to soothe it away. Men never bear such things patiently. They either become stolid or find means to dissipate the thoughts of them.

Paul went to Europe.

Lucy stayed at home, with an eating fire at her heart consuming her.

Wandering over the storied lands of the East, Paul Dean was led to much thought. He became a reflecting man. He never for an hour forgot Lucy. His affections were not of the transferable order, and he had truly loved his wife.

He stayed away a whole year, and when he returned it was with the intention of seeking her and proposing an alliance on a new basis, that of mutual forbearance and tolerance.

In the meantime, Lucy, of the two, had changed most. She had secluded herself from society, as it only aggravated her pain; and she, literally, went about doing good, and it seemed to alleviate her suffering.

"Oh! if she had been less exacting," was the burden of her cry. "If Paul would only come for her again, she would be so different; but she knew he never would." She had not once heard from him, nor did she ever expect to.

Paul Dean arrived at Bristol in the night. Morning found him on his way to the house of Lucy's father. It was a long walk, but he thought he needed it to fortify him for the coming interview, for he feared that he might find Lucy still unforgiving. Walking toward that point, hoping and fearing, he saw a span of bays coming toward him, running at the top of their speed. The driver's seat was vacant. The carriage was occupied by a lady. Paul was by nature a manly man. The lady must be saved. He was no mean athlete; nature and practice had made him powerful in strength, and now he meant to test it. He fixed himself, and sprang forward, caught the horses by the bits, and shouted. They reared and plunged, but they were arrested, and other help was at hand. He turned to the carriage then. The lady was lying back white and helpless. He took her out, and carried her to the nearest dwelling, it was Aunt Cinda's, and laying her on a couch he still had her enfolded in his arms.

"My wife," he breathed—then there was a long silence.

"Are you come for me, Paul?"

"Yes."

Another moment of quiet.

"We will live together all the years of our lives, will we not, Paul, forgiving and loving?"

"Yes, darling, we belong to each other now, we will try to forget self entirely."

Long suffering had worked good to them. A life of harmony lay open before them. They looked well to the domestic loom, and the carpet was kept right side out.

QUEEN VICTORIA
And Her Scottish Guest.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MRS. FANNIE R. FEUDGE.

Among the memories of pleasant hours spent in England and dear old Scotland, I recall the following:

On the occasion of the queen's earliest visit to Scotland, she was holding her first drawing-room levee in Edinburgh. Everybody wanted to see the youthful and popular sovereign of course, and equally of course, everybody could not be admitted. So cards were sent out to as many as could be conveniently accommodated—many probably who had never before been invited to the presence of royalty, and who had scarcely anticipated such an honor. For her majesty Victoria was very gracious, and was willing to sacrifice something of courtly etiquette, in order the more fully to enthrone herself in the loving hearts of her Scottish subjects—well aware that once gained they were gained forever. For a Caledonian's friendship stands as fast as the sturdy base of his own Ben Nevis.

But while the hearts of many were made glad in receiving the coveted cards, many others were doomed to disappointment, and among the latter was an old Highland woman of seventy at least, who, hearing of the queen's intended visit to Scotland, had travelled more than a hundred miles to secure a sight of her sovereign's face. She had no expectation of being *invited* to "the drawing-room," nor even a wish to occupy a position among the high-born guests, that would have proved both novel and embarrassing. All she hoped for was to be permitted for once in her life, to stand at the door of "the great house," and all unseen herself, to peer into the gilded halls, and satisfy her longing eyes by gazing at the splendor within, and above all things else, at the gentle face of the youthful queen. For this, she had made on foot a fatiguing journey—for this alone she had been for many days domiciled in the wee cabin of a Highland friend, whose narrow limits seemed without her presence, full almost to repletion; for this one brief glimpse of royalty she had longed and waited, hoped and dreamed, and now should she be discouraged by the difficulties in the way, and go back to her humble home in the hills, and *die without seeing her queen*.

Never, *never*—she would *try*, though others said it was impossible. So late in the evening keeping her own counsel, she stole out alone, and quickly traversing the crowded streets, presented herself, in her peasant's dress, at the castle gate. Through this she managed to pass unnoticed amid a crowd of others, but on reaching the door of the first ante-chamber, she was rudely challenged by the ushers and guards, and bidden to go home—or to some darker region, if she would, and derisively told that her majesty did "not receive visitors *in Highland court dress*." Nothing daunted the sturdy old Scotswoman stepped aside, determining to "bide her time," and with genuine Scottish persistency, resolving "to see her blessed majesty or die trying"—as she said afterwards. So by-and-by, when the uniformed officials were more at leisure, she strolled up to admire their gay dress and ask smooth questions that gratified their vanity, even from an old woman, and induced them to consent that she should (on her own responsibility) go as far as *the door* of the reception-room and try to get a glimpse of her majesty, without being herself seen. "But how in the queen dressed, and how shall I know *her* among so many fine ladies?" asked the old woman. The ushers did not remember what her majesty wore on this occasion, but had no doubt that she was "the most *plainly-dressed* lady in the room, and probably wore on her head no other ornament than her own beautiful blonde hair, with perhaps the addition of a single rosebud."

Thus guided, our heroine went cautiously forward, and crouching down just outside the door, leaned her elbows on the sill and peered curiously into the brilliant throng, for a long time vainly seeking among such an array of jewels and satins, laces and flowers, for one *simply-dressed lady with only a rosebud in her hair*. After awhile some movements of the vast assemblage opened an avenue directly in front of her majesty, and lo! there stood revealed to the enraptured gaze of our visitor the petite figure of the young queen in its snowy robe of satin and lace, with a single fragrant rose nestling lovingly among the wavy masses of her luxuriant hair! Such unlooked-for success was too much for the equanimity of the excited highlander; and utterly oblivious both of her own rather doubtful position and the charges of the ushers, not to be seen or heard, she exclaimed excitedly, at the same time devoutly clasping her hands in extremest devotion: "There she is! I've seen her, I've seen her! God bless her pretty majesty! Now auld Janie McDougald can e'en gang hame and die in peace." A sixty-four pounder suddenly whizzing through that stately company could scarcely have produced a more startling effect than did this outburst of a grateful and loving heart. But while lords and ladies stood spell-bound, and excited officials rushed to the rescue, the young queen, with the genuine kindness of heart and ready comprehension of the situation that so peculiarly characterize her on all occasions, stepped quietly forward, gave her hand to the now astounded old lady, and having assisted her to rise, led her to her own sofa and seated herself beside her guest. Then gracefully waving off the lords and ladies, whose presence would have embarrassed the unaccustomed visitor, the gentle queen devoted herself for something like an hour to the entertainment of the Scotian, asking and answering questions without restraint, and finally led her to the door and saw the old highlander depart, the very happiest woman in the kingdom. When the youthful sovereign resumed her seat the rose no longer adorned her beautiful hair; but had we been clairvoyant, we should have seen it caressingly folded in a pair of withered hands and pressed lovingly to a warmly-beating heart, every throb of which was in loyalty to her noble young sovereign.

About noon the next day Queen Victoria might have been seen sitting on a low stool in front of a fire that blazed on the hearth of the cotter's lowly cabin, where the old Scotswoman found a temporary home. The queen was sipping with evident enjoyment oat-meal porridge from such a wooden bowl as those in general use among the Scotch peasantry, while on her lap rested a wooden platter piled with oaten cakes; and she was waited on by the same withered hands that a few hours before had so lovingly clasped the half-open rosebud. Which was the happier of the two it would be difficult to say. It was by just such acts of considerate kindness to *all* her subjects with whom she came in contact—the lowly as well as the lofty and grand—that England's model queen became enthroned in the hearts of her people; and from prince to peasant, all tell you that while many women have done virtuously, their own pure, noble, womanly queen excels them all.

☞ Female agitation is going beyond civil suffrage. As the winter ball-season approaches, woman insists on her right to bare arms.

A WOMAN'S PLEA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY A. ALPHONSE DAYTON.

Since tears will never bring me back
The adoration of your heart,
I bow my spirit's pride and plead
Your full forgiveness e'er we part.

'Tis not the past that brings to me
This deep, deep pain and utter dread,
But that from all my future years
The sunshine of your love is fled.

'Twas one long day of joy to me,
A paradise of perfect bliss,
That even bears some blossom still
To shed its fragrance over this.

You know not how a woman's heart
Through silent length of lonely years,
Still treasures up a faded love
Amid its solitude of tears.

If I have been untrue, the proof
Will only bring a deeper pain,
And all my lips can ever say
Will not restore your love again.

Your scorn may follow me through life
And stamp its seal upon my name,
Which memory will only hold
Weighed down by deep, reproachful blame.

But when my heart enshrined such love
As it has felt and feels for you,
'Twill keep its unrequited faith
Till Time reveals and proves it true.

Two Wrecked Lives.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

"But he is so old," Lucia said, as she stood before her father in the pleasant parlor of his city residence. "Almost as old as you are, and I am only seventeen."

"He is older than you are, I admit," answered Mr. Trevor, brushing off some particles of dust from his sleeve. "But he is not to blame for that you know."

"I know that," answered Lucia. "No more am I to blame for not wanting to marry him."

"But I wish it," answered Mr. Trevor. "He is rich. He can give you the finest of fine things. You can be a queen in society, and enjoy yourself to the utmost extent of your capabilities for enjoyment. Think of that."

"But, I do not love him," said Lucia.

"You have the silly notions which all girls of your age have respecting love," Mr. Trevor said, with quiet sarcasm in his tones. "Love is expected to make life Paradise, but when the theory is put into practice, it won't work. Love, without bank accounts to back it, won't buy diamonds and fine clothes. Have you ever thought of that?"

"I never thought much about it in any way," answered Lucia, simply.

"Probably not," said Mr. Trevor. "I am glad of it. It will be so much the easier for you to rid yourself of the idea that it is necessary to get half crazy after a person before it is safe to marry them."

"But, father," said Lucia, looking up from the flowers she was arranging, "don't you think love counts for anything in life?"

"Yes, of course," he answered. "But not everything, as you seem to think. Granting that it does, I do not see what argument that advances against accepting Mr. Densmore's offer. You do not love any one else?"

"No," she answered.

"Well, then; the case stands like this: Mr. Densmore loves you. You must admit that he can have no other motive in asking your hand in marriage, because you are not beautiful in the superlative sense of the word, neither are you the heiress of great wealth. Loving you, he will give you the luxuries of life to your heart's utmost desire. He will gratify every whim, and your wish will be his law. With such a position in society, with wealth at your command, and a kind and indulgent husband, you ought to be satisfied. Any reasonable woman would. In time you would love him. Love of that kind which he gives you will create a responsive feeling in your heart towards him."

"I could respect him, but I am afraid I could not love him as well as I ought to, perhaps," Lucia said, soberly. "Marriage seems like a solemn thing to me, father. It isn't an agreement for a day or a week or a year, but for life."

"I know that," answered Mr. Trevor. "But you say you love no one else. Bringing a heart to this marriage which has no prior love to influence it, you could make the love which you would be sure to feel toward your husband the one great love of your life. If you did not love him at first, you would respect him, and feel grateful to him for the interest he took in you, and you would feel it to be your duty to love him, and these influences would soon create the proper feeling in your heart toward him, as I said before."

"They might," she answered, with a shadow of doubt in her voice and in her face.

"But I wish to know your decision," her father, said, drawing on his gloves. "If my wishes are of any weight with you, you will send him a favorable reply. You will never regret it; but if you do not accept his proposal, you may wish many times in the future that you had not let these foolish theories of love stand between you and your own interests. To be frank with you, Lucia, I am in need of assistance, and Densmore can help me. You can see that a good deal depends upon you in the matter. I shall not *make* you accept him against your own wishes, but I do desire such a result, and I hope it will be reached by a little exercise of your common sense. Think again, before saying no."

"If you wish it so much—if it will help you," she said, hesitatingly, "and he will take me without my loving him, why—you may tell him so. But tell him, father, that I do not love him, and maybe I never shall. Tell him that I don't want him to take me, expecting something from me which I may never be able to give him."

"You are a sensible girl," Mr. Trevor said, and kissed her. "You will be happy, I know, when you are Densmore's wife. I am glad that I can tell him yes. It takes quite a load from my mind. I am *sure* you will be happy."

"I *hope* so, but I am not *so sure*," she said, with many misgivings, as she watched her father go down the street. "I have done it because he wished it, and against my own will, but I *may* be happy, after all. I hope so, oh! I hope so!"

Three years went by after Lucia stood at the altar and said the solemn words which made her Hugh Densmore's wife, before the dream of her life came to her—the sweet, delirious dream of love, which comes some time to all of us.

In those years she had tried to cheat herself into the belief that she loved Hugh Densmore as well as she could have loved any man, but sometimes she could not make herself believe it. She respected him, and she felt for him a friendship of a certain sort, but it was not love.

One day he brought a visitor home to dinner. Lucia was in the parlor when they came in. She was in white, with blue flowers in her hair and at her throat. There was something about her suggestive of summer, and Max Dunleith thought her the most beautiful woman he had ever seen as she stood there in the sunshine.

"Mrs. Densmore, allow me to present the son of an old friend of mine, Max Dunleith. He came north on a little tour, and I have succeeded in inducing him to make his home with us while he stays. I am quite sure you will like each other. I hope so, at least, as I shall have to leave you to each other's company a good deal."

Max Dunleith bowed, and held the soft hand Lucia held out a moment in his own.

"I am sure you are quite welcome," she said. "I will try to help in making your stay pleasant."

Their eyes met as they stood there with her hand in his, and a strange thrill went over both of them. A new and sudden sensation which neither could analyze. It was the beginning of the end.

They were left much alone together. And those hours were dangerously pleasant. They read together, and sang and talked, and there was something subtle and entrancing about the influence which each exerted over the other. While they were together they were at rest. Apart they felt a longing, a sense of something wanting, which vanished when they came together.

Lucia was happy, though she knew not why she should be more so than in the years gone by. She could not or did not for awhile comprehend what had come into her life to make it all at once seem complete.

But one day it came like a revelation to both of them.

They were at the piano singing. The song was that exquisite old Spanish ballad, "Juanita," so full of the fire and passion of the South.

For some reason she stopped singing at the refrain, and he sang it through alone.

"Nita, Juanita, ask thy soul if we should part!
Nita, Juanita, lean thou on my heart;
Let me linger by thy side,
For the world is wild and wide."

Something compelled her to lift her eyes to his. They met, and in that one swift glance the truth came to them. It was something sweeter than friendship which made the hours so full of happy thoughts and dreams, when they were together. They were more than friends could ever be to each other. The knowledge brought a pain that was full of a strange sweetness.

"Lucia, my darling!" That was all, but it was enough to tell how well he loved her.

She dropped her head upon her hands, and a dissonant clash of jangled cords struck through the room.

He bent down, and lifted her head, and kissed her once, twice, passionate, burning kisses, which thrilled her with sudden ecstasy.

"Oh Max!" she cried!—then stopped suddenly.

"You love me! I know it, I feel it!" he said, tenderly. "If we—"

"Don't," she said, putting aside his hand. "It is wrong." A burst of tears came to her eyes, and, sobbing, she dropped her head upon her hands again.

"It is *not* wrong!" he cried. "We love because we are powerless to prevent it. Without our own knowledge even, our hearts have gone out to each other. It is a law of existence, as old and as immutable as the hills, that hearts will meet and recognize each other which have been created for each other. Ask yourself, Lucia, if it is not so. Have I made any effort to win your love? You see we have neither willed nor striven to create this feeling toward each other. It has come to us because fate ordained it so. Tell me, Lucia, am I not right?"

"I don't know; I can't think," she said. "My brain whirls. I am all bewildered."

"But you love me—tell me that?" he entreated. "I want to hear it from your own lips. I never loved a woman before, and I want the women I love to tell me that she has a tender thought for me."

"It is wrong, it is sin to tell you this, Max," she cried out suddenly, "but I do love you! God help me, but I love you."

He caught her in his arms and kissed her over and over again. She struggled for a moment against his embrace, then lay upon his breast silently, quietly, as though fate had compelled her to be passive, and let the web weave itself about her.

Let me say that I do not justify them. Do not understand me to mean that. Neither do I condemn them—I leave that to the judge of us all. Two hearts met and loved. And that love which should have been pure and holy, existing circumstances made sinful. But this love was deep and strong, and masterful, and could they resist it? Could they put aside this sweetest thought of life and crush it down? Without each other, what was life but a desolate waste over which each must go his way alone to the bitter end. With each other—and there they stopped, for that could never be, unless—

Of course, the stern path of duty was clear. *They failed to tread it.* But the great error was the first one—in marrying without that love which alone sanctifies the nuptial tie. That was the first false step.

The story is not a pleasant one to linger over in detail. One day a ship sailed and Max Dunleith and Lucia Densmore were among the passengers. They knew that the world would condemn them, and cast out their memories into infamy, but love blinded them to all else. Life together held many charms—apart it was more than death.

Lucia had hesitated at the last when the thought of the kind old man who had been better to her than she deserved came to her. But only for a moment. Max was all the world to her now. Duty could not save her. She had left a few words of explanation, but she had not attempted to justify herself. That she knew was useless. Other people could not understand the feelings which governed her. For love's sake she would wickedly have given up the hope of Heaven itself.

But the fair skies and pleasant winds which promised a prosperous voyage at the sailing of the ship, proved false—and before they were four days out at sea, a terrible storm came up.

"We shall be wrecked," Lucia said, clinging to Max, while the tempest howled about the reeling ship. "I am sure of it—but I do not feel afraid."

"We are together," he answered. "Death would not be so very hard with you close to me."

There came a sudden crash—and then wild cries of fear and terror.

"We are on a rock," the captain said. "The ship is going down."

It was indeed so. The waves broke over that sinking bit of world, and threatened to swallow it wholly.

"If we die, it will be together," Max said, clasping her close to him.

"I am not afraid to die," she said, smiling up at him. "In doing as I have done, I have obeyed something stronger than myself. I was wrong in marrying Hugh Densmore—but I could not help loving you."

"God bless you," he cried, holding her closer, as the ship shivered from one end to the other. "I can face death without a shudder, for you are mine—mine wholly!"

A swift lurch—a sudden baptism of wild waters, and the ship went down.

"Max! Max! where are you?" a voice cried out, among the heaving waters.

"Here, darling, holding you on my heart," his voice answered. "We are dying, but it is together."

"And that is so sweet!" she whispered.

And then the waves leaped upon them like angry demons, and thrust them down! down!

The next morning the fishermen found two bodies drifted ashore. They were clasped in each other's arms; and the pitying fishermen did not separate them. They made a grave upon the shore; and some kind hand put up a rude cross to mark the grave of two who went out into the after life together, hand in hand. They had done wrong—they scarcely cared to live. Let us hope that their untoward fate may have proved some expiation of their crime.

OCTOBER SONG.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CATHERINE KINGSTON FILER.

Lo! all the vales are red with flame
That creeps the hillsides, sweeping higher
Until the mountains glow and burn,
Their mantled summits capped with fire.
The tiger-lily hangs its bell,
The columbine gleams in the dell,
And oriflammes of Fall, unfurled,
Herald his reign unto the world.

The locust hums through drowsy hours
In rolling meadows shorn of hay,
The languid thrush flits 'neath the sun
Unto the woodland-shadows gray,
My weary heart, my weary feet,
Pass from the city's dusty street
To paradise of listless ease
Beneath the verdurous forest-trees.

Here canopy of gold and green
Half hides and half reveals the light
Of Autumn skies serenely blue;
There is no glare though all is bright.
The dainty blooms of shadow blow,
The star-flower lists the brooklet low,
Singing its liquid song of love
Unto the ear that bends above.

O, come with me, ye tired hearts,
From Mammon-worship, dust and heat,
Where winds are soft and linnets sing,
And to the senses all is sweet.
Shut out from view the city's glare;
Let study, striving, work, and care,
Drop from your lives a happy while,
And haste to Nature's welcoming smile!

Now Autumn woods are cool with shade;
And vocal streams, that glide through shadows,
Play Pan th' Immortal's sighing reeds,
Or sing their own songs in the meadows,
Rippling through the green bulrushes,
Ploughing between the alder bushes,
Beneath whose shadow, dim and stilly,
Wait gathering hand the flag and lily.

ISABEL.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

CHAPTER I.

"Yes, loving is a painful thrill,
And not to love more painful still;
But oh! it is the worst of pain
To love and not be loved again."

As she stood beneath the maple trees, the crimson leaves falling around her, she might have been the Queen of the Fairies, fresh from her sylvan realms.

Her beauty was something wonderful. A small, petite figure, with grace in every movement; hair that was golden in the sun and brown in the shade, hanging in luxuriant rippling waves down to her slender waist; an oval, flower-like face, where

"The lily and the rose,
Were blended in a sweet repose,"

and almond-shaped, languishing eyes, the color of violets, shaded by long brown lashes. Her rounded neck and tiny, tapering hands were white as snow.

And yet this girl, so richly dowered by loving Nature, was only Isabel Layton, the village schoolmistress; a penniless orphan, living in the house of a proud and wealthy relative, and earning her bread and raiment by patient toil.

At her side, regarding her earnestly and admiringly, stood a tall young man of twenty-five. His stalwart form and dark face were handsome, but there was a strange, passionate expression in his fiery, coal-black eyes.

"How beautiful you look, little Isabel, with the sunlight on your wonderful hair, and the hue of the dying leaves in your cheeks," he said, in a low and tender tone.

"You are disposed to be poetical and complimentary to-day, Mr. Wilde," replied Miss Layton dryly, catching some of the floating leaves in her hands.

"Could I be otherwise on such a day as this, with such a vision of loveliness before me? If there is any poetry in a man's soul, surely such a scene ought to call it forth." He laughed gently, but his tone was very earnest.

"Why do you flatter me so persistently?" said the girl impatiently.

George Wilde drew a step nearer, and caught her little hands in his own broad palms, while his large dark eyes grew strangely tender.

"I do not flatter you, Isabel—I am in earnest. Can you not see that I mean what I say—that I love you as never man loved woman before?"

"You are jesting, Mr. Wilde. Let us return to our friends."

"No, I am not jesting, and we will not return until you give me an answer. You know I have loved you all summer; my actions have shown it, if not my words. A smile, a glance of your eye, is worth more to me than all the world besides; and yet you are always cold and distant with me, when you know how I adore you."

"I know you talk very absurdly," said Isabel haughtily, "and since you desire me to do so, I will answer you plainly. I have seen for some time that you paid me marked attentions; and knowing that I could never love you, I have used every means in my power to discourage further advances. I hear the music striking up at the Grove; let us return and join in the dance."

"Not yet," he said in a deep voice. "You cannot love me, you say; well, I will be content without love. Only consent to marry me, and my devotion will win your heart afterward. I am rich, you are poor; think what you will gain by becoming my wife. No more tiresome toil in that wretched school-room; you shall have the finest house in town, the most costly clothing, everything that wealth can provide, and I will be your slave."

"It is useless to talk any more on this subject, Mr. Wilde. Without love, marriage would be misery to me, although I dwelt in a palace."

"And why can you not love me, Isabel?" He threw himself on his knees before her, and raised his black eyes imploringly to her beautiful, pitying face. "See, I kneel to you; I sue on my knees for what any other maiden would gladly give me—love!"

"It is true. There are other girls far more worthy than I, who would gladly marry you. Bestow your love on some one of them, and be happier than I could ever make you."

"This is folly," he said impatiently. "I love you, Isabel Layton; do you think I could transfer my affections, if I would? No; loving you as I do, I can never love another."

"And I can never love you, Mr. Wilde—I can never marry you," replied Isabel, firmly but sorrowfully, turning away her face.

George Wilde leaped to his feet, frowning darkly, and clenching his hands so fiercely that the blood appeared on his brown palms.

"You have some reason for treating me thus, besides your dislike for me, Isabel Layton, and I think I know what it is. You love that white-faced young lawyer, Cameron, who has been flirting with you so much. Ah, your cheek reddens at his name! Well, let me tell you this: you may never marry me; but, as God hears me, you shall never become the wife of another. I swear it! You must be mine, living or dead."

"I am not to be frightened by such threats," replied Isabel calmly, but her white face and trembling hands belied her words.

"Very well;" said Wilde with a grim smile. "And now let us return to the merry-making, or our friends will marvel at our long absence."

Stern and gloomy, he walked by her side through the Autumn woods, speaking never a word. Around them the crimson leaves of the maple mingled with the yellow of the walnut, and the brown oaks and dark green cedars interlaced their branches overhead. The blue jays called noisily to each other, and the solemn crows kept up a melancholy "caw! caw!" as if chanting the requiem of the dying year.

In a few minutes they came to an opening in the forest, which was called Cedar Grove. This was a level spot as large as a good-sized garden, destitute of trees, and covered with a carpet of soft, thick grass. Thither a party from the village had come to hold a picnic, and were now enlivening the scene by a dance on the velvety grass. The musician, one of the young men from the village, was drawing sweet strains of melody from his violin, and several couple were keeping time to its joyous notes. Isabel joined in the dance, but Wilde looked on moodily, his thin lips curled in scorn.

"What ails George Wilde?" said young Will Verner to Cora Layton, Isabel's wealthy cousin. "He has just been walking with your cousin, and now he looks as solemn as a parson. I fancy pretty Isabel must have refused his hand and heart."

"No danger," replied Cora, flushing with displeasure—for she herself had long been angling for Wilde, with but poor success; "my cousin would be glad enough to get him!"

"I can't agree with you," returned Verner. "Your cousin is beautiful enough to win any man's heart. I see she is dancing now with Guy Cameron, and if I am any judge of countenances, they are deeply interested in each other."

"So you think Guy Cameron more desirable than George Wilde?"

"I did not say so, but in many respects I think he is. To be sure, Wilde is wealthy, while Cameron is not, but Cameron is much the handsomer of the two, and a scholar and a gentleman besides."

This conversation was interrupted by Wilde, who approached and asked Miss Layton to dance with him, which the young lady was very glad to do. Will Verner also sought a partner, and the merry-making went on briskly.

CHAPTER II.

Tired of dancing, Guy Cameron proposed to his lovely partner a little stroll through the forest. Isabel assented with a blush, and together they sauntered slowly beneath the giant trees, whose tops seemed to reach almost to the white clouds floating lazily across the deep-blue sky.

"How beautiful are the woods in Autumn! I can sympathize with the poet, when he says—

"Ah, 'twere a lot too blest,
Forever in thy colored shades to stray;
Amid the kisses of the soft southwest,
To rove and dream for aye!"

"This is my favorite season also, Miss Layton. The air is so cool and invigorating and—but what strange looking creature is that?" he said, changing the subject suddenly, as a tall, dark-faced woman, clad in a fantastic dress, appeared in the path in front of them. Her form was bent, and her face thin and wrinkled.

"Gypsy Nell, I declare!" said Isabel.

"Why so it is. What could have induced her to leave her wretched hut, I wonder? Now is a good time to have your fortune told; some say she is very clever in that line. I will give her a coin, and we will hear what Fate has in store for you," laughed Cameron.

"You wish to have your fortune told?" said the gypsy in a quavering voice. "I can read the lines on your palm unerringly. Give me your hand, young lady."

She examined Isabel's little hand attentively for a moment.

"You are beloved by two men," she began, "both are handsome. One of them you love, the other you fear. Ah! well may you fear him, for he will bring you great trouble. Here is a cross on your palm, maiden, which signifies an early death. May the fates avert such a doom for one so young and lovely and amiable as you!"

"You might have given me a brighter fortune," said Isabel laughingly, but her face was very pale. "However, I do not believe in such folly."

"Alas! it is no folly," replied the gypsy. "But will the gentleman let me look at his hand. Perhaps Fate may be kinder to him than to the young lady."

"I do not wish to test your wonderful powers," said Cameron, sarcastically.

"Very well. I must be going then. Farewell."

In a moment her tall, angular form had disappeared in the forest.

"I hope you were not frightened by the gypsy's dark prophecy, Isabel?" Cameron said.

"No, I was not frightened—but I must confess that her gloomy predictions did not add to my cheerfulness," she replied laughing. "And yet I know it is all foolishness. I think every one has the power to carve out his or her own fortune."

"I do not agree with you wholly," replied the young man, smiling.

"What—do you believe in the gypsy's art!" asked Isabel in astonishment.

"No; but I believe that a certain young friend of mine, has the power to make or mar my fortune, as she chooses," he answered, his dark eyes bent on her face.

"What do you mean!" inquired Isabel, trying to look unconscious, but blushing deeply.

"Simply that I love you, little Isabel; that I almost worship you, my beautiful blue-eyed saint. With your love, life will be heaven to me—without it, the world will be a lonely, miserable desert. What is your answer?"

"I am a poor girl, without friends or wealth; I am unworthy to be loved by you," stammered Isabel; but Guy Cameron stopped further words with kisses.

"You are worthy of the love of the noblest king that ever walked this earth!" he exclaimed, rapturously. "Only tell me that you love me my beautiful darling."

"I do love you," she whispered, her head on his bosom.

"And you will be my wife?"

"Yes."

"God bless you, Isabel!" he said, holding her close in his arms. "I care not for the gypsy's dismal predictions now. Henceforth life holds nothing but joy for us both."

A few moments more spent in exchanging vows of love and constancy, and the happy pair turned to retrace their steps to the Grove. Ere they were out of sight, a tall, dark man stepped from behind a huge tree, and shook his clenched hand at their retreating forms.

It was George Wilde, with his black eyes blazing with passion.

"So this is the reason you refused me, pretty Isabel, is it? You love this white-faced lawyer, do you? Curse him and his boyish face. I could murder him now—and yet he cannot help loving her, she is so beautiful—so beautiful and so cruel!"

Muttering harshly, he strode rapidly through the forest by another path, and arrived at the Grove a few minutes ere Isabel and her lover appeared. The dancing had ceased—and the young people were gathered around the old gypsy woman, who, by some means, had found her way thither. She was telling their fortunes, looking wisely solemn all the while. Wilde pushed his way through before the others, and held out his hand.

"What will the future bring to me?" he asked, trying to smile, but his face was ghastly.

"I can see nothing," the woman muttered, examining his hand. "It is all dark—dark!"

"What do you mean, old hag?" demanded Wilde angrily.

"I mean that I can see no future for you, young man; the life line on your palm is crossed here, and your death is near at hand."

With another ghastly smile he turned away, and commenced talking with Will Verner on a different subject.

CHAPTER III.

It was growing late; the sun was nearly down; and the party, consisting of nearly a dozen couples, prepared to return to their homes. A short walk down a winding path brought them to the edge of a small river; here a boat was moored, which was to carry them down the silvery stream to the village, a distance of nearly a mile. Laughing and jesting, they were soon all on board, and the boat was allowed to drift idly with the current, while its occupants gazed upon the beautiful scenery around them.

The sun had set, but the full moon arose above the trees, casting its weird white light upon the placid river. The night was warm and delightful, with a gentle breeze blowing from the south. Not a sound broke the solemn stillness, save the hooting of a pair of owls hid somewhere among the gloomy pines which grew on the river's banks.

"Let us have music upon the waters!" said gay Will Verner. "Bert Allen, get out your violin, and give us something to cheer us through this confoundedly dismal place."

Allen procured his instrument, and after some preliminary tuning, struck up a lively waltz, which doubtless astonished the solemn old owls greatly, for they ceased their unearthly hooting to listen to the sweet-voiced violin. Allen played tune after tune, until his arm ached; at last he laid down the instrument, with a laugh.

"Ladies, some of you sing us a song, now; the old fiddle is exhausted," he said.

"Yes, a song, by all means," added Will Verner. "Miss Layton, you have an excellent voice; sing us a song of 'the summer and the sea!'"

Isabel sang Moore's musical lyric, commencing—

"Oh, had we some bright little isle of our own
In the blue summer ocean, far off and alone!"

in a voice clear and sweet as a silver bell. Guy Cameron sat at her side, his eyes bent adoringly on her lovely face; George Wilde watched them both, his face deathly pale.

As she ceased singing, Isabel arose, and walking to the end of the boat, stood looking down at the silvery, rippling water. The moonlight fell full on her exquisite face and waving, wonderful hair, making her beauty almost angelic. Wilde gazed upon her a moment as if spell-bound; then he arose and walked to her side. Those who observed him, saw that his form tottered, and that his eyes were wild as a madman's.

"What a beautiful night!" he said to Isabel, in tones low and unsteady.

"It is a lovely night, indeed," she replied, not a little surprised when she saw by whom she was addressed.

"How calm and clear the river looks; would you not like to sleep forever beneath the cold water?"

"I have no desire to do so at present, Mr. Wilde."

"Why did you sing that song a moment ago, Isabel?" he asked, his haggard face bent close to the girl's rosy, rounded cheek.

"Why? Because I was requested to sing."

"Yes, I know—but you meant that song for your lover's ears alone, and it maddened me. "Oh, Isabel, I cannot bear to see you the wife of another!"

"Have you lost your senses?" said Isabel haughtily.

"Yes! You have robbed me of my whole existence—without you I cannot live!"

"If you can talk of nothing else, you will oblige me by leaving me alone, Mr. Wilde."

"Isabel!" his voice sunk to a hoarse whisper. "I heard your conversation with Cameron in the forest—I heard your vows of love—I heard you promise to become his wife."

"Well—was it any concern of yours?"

"Yes, for I have sworn that you shall never marry any one but me. You may love another, but you must be mine, Isabel, in life or in death!"

"You talk like a madman!" said the girl, drawing away.

"I am very near to being one—and I ask you for the last time, to be my wife."

"Mr. Wilde, I will not listen to this any longer! I would rather die than marry you."

Wilde raised his hands to his head; they trembled like the leaves of an aspen.

"You shall have your choice," he said. "You will not live with me, but you shall die with me. Remember the gypsy's words—death is near at hand for us both!"

Ere any one could comprehend his intention, much less interfere to prevent his carrying it out, he had caught Isabel's light form in his arms, and leaped far out into the swiftly flowing river. The poor girl gave one despairing scream, and raised her arms imploringly; then they both sunk from sight beneath the cruel waters.

Guy Cameron threw off his coat, and leaped to the rescue of the drowning girl, while the ladies screamed in concert, and the men stood idly looking on, apparently half stupified by terror.

"Don't dive, Cameron!" called Will Verner, who was the first to recover his senses. "They will rise in a moment, and then we can easily get you all on board the boat again."

His words were true, in part. Soon Isabel's white-robed figure rose to the surface within a few feet of Cameron. The young man quickly caught the inanimate form in his arms, and sustained her until the boat came along side. Willing hands assisted them both on board, and endeavored to revive the insensible girl, who lay with her long tresses half covering her pallid face, and her violet eyes closed—forever? No; presently the white lids fluttered open, and the starry eyes gazed around in bewilderment.

"Where am I?" she faintly asked.

"Safe, my darling!" answered her lover, holding her cold hands in his.

"That dreadful man—where is he?"

"I do not know; possibly in the presence of his Master. Boys, keep a sharp look-out; if his body rises, we must use every means to save him."

"How could such an accident happen?" asked Cora Layton, her face almost as white as her cousin's.

"It was no accident," replied Isabel, pitying the girl's evident misery. "I think the man was insane, or he never would have acted so desperately."

"I thought he behaved strangely all the afternoon," said one of the young ladies.

Cora Layton bit her lips until the blood came, and turned away her face, while bitter tears fell silently on her clasped hands. Her dream of love had come to a mournful end.

For a long time they watched for the reappearance of that other form, lately so full of manly vigor and life; but in vain. Probably his terrible passion had killed him ere he sank beneath the water, and the rapid current had hurried his body away. At any rate, no trace of him was ever found.

Not long afterward there was a quiet wedding in the village, and Guy Cameron and Isabel Layton were united for life; and though their lives are serenely happy, they will never forget that picnic in the forest, nor the old gipsy's curiously truthful prophecy.

THE Tragedy at Uncle Thomas's.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

We three girls, Evelyn Marsh, Thekla Brown (Evelyn's cousin) and I sat curled up in the deep bay window, and Evelyn's lover, Brad Wilverton, lounged near making a "cat's cradle" with one of my hair ribbons, when Stanley Morse came up the path.

We had been watching for him the last fifteen minutes, and hailed his approach with exclamations of delight, for Stanley had been to the post-office, and that meant something to us, for we were spending the summer in the backwoods in Uncle Thomas's great old castle of a house, and the post-office was four miles distant. We had been there a week now, and this was the first time we had heard from the office. We all made a raid upon Stanley as soon as he entered the room, asking for our letters. Stanley sat down and crossed his knees, and put one hand under his chin and began to whistle placidly, while we three girls all talked at once and threatened terrible punishment if he did not deliver the mail.

"No use, girls," said Brad at length, "Stan will never give you what you want until you sit down and stop teasing. You know he won't, so why don't you sit down?"

We all knew the truth of Brad's words, and accordingly sank back into the bay window again. Stanley hung up his rubber coat—for it was raining—and went out and bathed his face and hands and combed his pretty brown hair, and then came back and knelt down by the window.

"Here is a paper for Evelyn," he said, "and two or three for Uncle Thomas, and a letter for Mr. Brad Wilverton from New York, and one for Miss Carlotta Allen, postmarked Paris, and it has 'come all the way over the sea,' as the beggars say."

I made a frantic grasp at the letter in Stanley's hand, but he adroitly dropped it under his palm and held out one finger which I seized instead.

"Now ask me pretty as a little girl should, and you shall have it," he said aggravatingly. "Say 'please, good sir, be so condescending and obliging as to allow me to take the letter which you were kind enough to bring all the way from the post-office?'"

I said the lingo over after him, for I knew there was no other way to get the letter, and then he gave it to me. It was from father, I knew. He was travelling in Europe, and that was how I came at Uncle Thomas's. I had been visiting Evelyn and some other friends in the city for a month or two, and then I went down to Uncle Tom's and persuaded a few friends to go with me for a season. I was to be married soon after father's return, to Stanley Morse, and Evelyn and Brad were to be bridesmaid and groomsman. Evelyn was the daughter of an old family friend, who had been wealthy but had failed, and she was engaged to Brad, and would marry him as soon as he was able. Brad was a young lawyer, but was rather *fast* and something of a spendthrift, and was forever in debt, and there did not seem much likelihood of his ever being in a situation to marry. But he and Evelyn were perfectly infatuated with each other, and declared they would rather wait a hundred years than break the engagement.

Brad was a gay, handsome fellow, and Evelyn was a nice sort of a girl. I thought they would get along happily together, if Brad would only sober down.

So there we were, two engaged couples, as foolish of course as engaged people usually are. Uncle Tom and Aunt Ellen declared that but for Thekla they might as well be alone, for all the society we four were. But Thekla, gay, rattle-headed, butterfly Thekla, was a source of daily delight to them. She hoed in the garden with Uncle Tom, and went to mill with him, and rode his horses to water, while we four took romantic walks or gazed at the moon, and she helped Aunt Ellen and the hired girl Susan bake pies and cakes, and sweep and dust, and indeed there was nothing she did not do. We were glad she was along to be sociable with the dear old couple, so we could be left to our own devices.

There was an odd looking bunch in one end of my letter, and I set the whole four to guessing what it could be.

"Open it and see," Stanley said at length, and I acted upon his novel suggestion.

All wrapped in soft cotton and tissue paper, it fell out, a magnificent diamond ring, that fairly dazzled my eyes as I held it in the light, freed from its wrappings. It was just like thoughtless, careless father, to send so valuable a thing in that unsafe way. But, oddly enough, it had reached me all right. It fairly made me feel faint to think what if it had been lost on the way.

It was a beautiful thing, and I slipped it on my finger and gazed at it with beaming eyes. Father knew my love for jewelry, and had sent me just such a present as I would most value.

They were all loud in praises, and Evelyn said she would give a year of her life to possess such a jewel. Thekla said she wouldn't, nor a *day* either, though she thought it a beautiful thing.

I ran with it down to the kitchen, where Aunt Ellen was preparing supper. Susan was there, but I never paused for a moment, but just held up the glittering ring before Aunt Ellen's eyes, till she put up her hand to shield them from the dazzling brightness.

"Just came in a letter from father," I cried. "Isn't it lovely?" And then I danced back again like a crazy thing.

When I reached the sitting-room I waltzed half a dozen times around the room before I noticed that Brad stood at the open door, directing a rough, seedy-looking man, who had lost his way, to somewhere I don't know where. The man was looking at me curiously, and no wonder, for I was whirling around the room like a mad creature, holding up my hand and gazing at the ring. I sank down behind the curtains when I saw him, and Brad came in and shut the door. We spent a long, merry evening together, and the clock struck eleven before we separated. Then Aunt Ellen lighted the night lamps and commanded us to retire.

Brad and Stanley occupied rooms in the second story. We girls on the ground floor, from preference. Evelyn and I slept in one bed, and Thekla in a room adjoining. We all were silent that night after getting into our beds. We usually lay awake and talked for half an hour, but we were tired enough with the day's excitement to omit that this night. I laid all my ornaments, ear-rings, jeweled comb, watch and chain and two rings—the diamond included—upon the stone mantle. It was careless, I know, but I never thought of taking any precautions in that house, and the first morning, when Aunt Ellen came to call us and found the door locked, she laughed at us so for our folly that we had never even locked the door since. I laid my diamond where I could see it the first thing in the morning, and never a thought of danger entered my head. Yet, when I awoke in the morning, the ring was gone. I started up, wide awake in a moment, when I saw that it was not where I had placed it.

My first thought was that Evelyn or Thekla had been playing me a trick. But Evelyn was sleeping soundly at my side, and on going into Thekla's room I found her in the same condition. Then I came back and began the search. On the mantle, behind the mantle, on the floor, under the bed, everywhere, but no diamond was to be

found. For full half an hour I searched, and then I called up Evelyn and Thekla to assist me. Like me, they at first thought I was jesting, in order to frighten them, but I soon convinced them of my seriousness, and we began the search anew. All to no avail. Then we went out and enlisted Aunt Ellen and Uncle Tom and Brad and Stanley. But the diamond was not in the house, and not being in the house, where was it? *Some one must have stolen it!*

This unpleasant fact forced itself upon me at last. Who could it be? Brad, Stanley, Evelyn and Thekla, beside aunt and uncle were all who knew its existence, except Susan. But Susan was a good, honest girl, daughter of one of Aunt Ellen's neighbors. She had not a suspicion of the value of the ring even. But when the search came, she threw open her room, and begged us to search all her belongings. Still no ring. Then Brad thought of the rough stranger, who had inquired his way at the door that day while I was dancing around the room, and gazing at my ring. As soon as he spoke I remembered howthe man had stared at my ring, and I decided in my mind that he was the thief.

Brad, Stanley and Uncle Tom immediately started out to track him if possible. He could not have gone far, they thought, in so short a time. But they came back at night, weary and discouraged with their search. They could find no trace of the man, and I gave up the ring as lost.

I felt my loss keenly, but was determined to make the best of matters, and say as little about it as possible.

I sometimes thought Evelyn and Thekla felt worse about it than I did. There was no end to their moanings over the loss.

But we managed to enjoy ourselves pretty well in spite of that.

"How I wish you and Evelyn could be married when I am," I said to Brad one evening as we all sat together.

"So do I," said Brad earnestly, "but I see little chance for it, while these confounded dunning letters come to me every day. Got another to-day."

"It's a confounded shame for a fellow to be cheated out of all pleasure in life for want of little money."

Evelyn slipped her hand softly into his. "Never mind," she whispered. "It is always darkest before daylight. We can wait."

Thekla lolled on the sofa across the room, her bright hair falling in showers over the pillow, her dark eyes watching us languidly.

"Oh dear!" she sighed, "how glad I am that I have no prospective wedding to bother my head about. It is perfectly delightful to be free to follow one's own will. No husband, no betrothed, no lover, no anything but just myself."

"How about the French physician in Buffalo?" Evelyn said slyly.

There was a handsome young Frenchman, a physician, who had been and still was nearly crazy over Thekla. He had made her repeated proposals of marriage only to be declined, but he still was her adoring slave, and was always ready to do her any service.

Once he waded waist deep into the river to secure her handkerchief which the wind had carried off, and half a dozen times had endangered his life to do her some service. He was a well-to-do young man in a good position, and it seemed strange that Thekla would not listen to his proposals.

"The young French physician is nothing to me, only a very convenient friend." Thekla said lazily. "He certainly is not my husband, not my betrothed, nor my lover. I have none of these."

"But he loves you," Brad insisted; "and so is your lover."

"No, he is not my lover," declared Thekla, "though I confess he loves me. Yes, I believe he would *die* for me, or commit a crime, if I asked him to. He loves in a way you and Stanley have never *dreamed* of. Yet he is not my lover."

The days went by, and we had been at Uncle Thomas's almost six weeks. In two or three more we should be going back to the city. Father wrote that he should be back in five weeks, at the longest.

It was the first of August, so in October I should be married. We had set the day of the fifteenth for the wedding.

Evelyn came to me one day with a beaming face.

"What do you think!" she said, "Brad says he shouldn't wonder if we could be married when you are."

"What!" I exclaimed. "Why, how is he going to manage?"

"Oh, he has settled his debts, and his partner writes that business will be lively this fall; and Brad says there are several moneyed cases coming into their hands—so he thinks we can manage it nicely. Won't it be grand!"

"But how has he settled his debts?" I asked. "Only a few weeks ago he was complaining of them."

"I know—but his partner was owing him considerable, I believe, and has paid him; so he can settle *his* accounts. I didn't question him much—I was so glad to think we could be married at the same time."

Evelyn went away to her room in a few moments, and left me alone. I was glad she did. I wanted to be alone to *think*. A horrible thought had forced itself upon my mind, and I could not drive it away. How came Brad with so much money, when he was complaining a few weeks before of his inability to pay his debts. *Did he know more than he owned about the diamond ring?* I could not bear to harbor the thought, but it would not be driven away. If he came honestly by the money, why had he given Evelyn such an unsatisfactory explanation.

I thought about it until my head grew dizzy. I thought of it for three days, and then I told Stanley the circumstances, and asked his opinion.

He looked grave.

"Brad has used money pretty freely of late," he said, "and he was telling me yesterday that he thought he should be married this fall; and when I asked him how he would manage, he gave very vague answers. Things do look a little dark. I will talk with him, and see if he can or will give any satisfactory explanation as to his increase of funds; and if he cannot, why then we must do something."

The thought of having a dreadful scene among the friends who had helped me spend the summer so pleasantly was terrible. I waited in speechless suspense to hear Stanley's report. It brought no relief.

"I pinned him right down," he said, "and asked him where he got so much money. And first he said his partner sent it to him—and then that a relative had died and left him some of it—and at last walked off and abruptly closed the conversation."

"Oh, Stanley," I cried, "what shall we do? I had rather never known anything about the ring, than to have a scene."

"We will consult Uncle Thomas," he said.

Uncle Thomas flew into a towering rage directly.

"I will see the young man myself," he said, "and if he can give no account of himself, we will proceed to severe measures, immediately."

It was a hot, oppressive August afternoon. I left Stanley and Uncle Thomas, and went into the parlor.

Evelyn was there, lying on the lounge, reading, happily unconscious of all that was transpiring. Thekla sat in the window, looking out over the meadow-land, with that odd, solemn, unreadable look on her little, piquant face, that I had sometimes noticed, and never understood. And yet Thekla Brown was such an open, rollicking, shallow girl, that I could not suppose even in those moments that she was thinking of anything very deep, or that she had anything to hide. I used to think it would be almost impossible for her to feel very deeply upon any subject.

"I think it is going to storm," she said at length, and as she said it a low rumble of thunder fell upon our ears. Then a quick flash of lightning streaked the north, and the wind rose. In five minutes the sky was black as ink, and the peals of thunder were almost deafening. It came up all of a sudden, as storms do in those hot, suffocating days. Thekla sat still in the window seat, when the door burst open, and Uncle Thomas stalked in.

"A pretty story the rascal tries to stuff me with," he began abruptly. "I have been to him, and he says, after telling me half-a-dozen other ways, that he received a letter ten days ago, post-marked New York, containing five one thousand dollar bank notes. There was only a short letter with them, and the handwriting he did not recognize. It said, 'From one who would die to serve you. Use the money as you see fit, but upon the *peril of your life*, do not mention having received it to any living soul.' This, he says, is the truth, and he knows no more about it than we do. A pretty story indeed! We will have an officer here to-morrow, and perhaps when the young gentleman's hands are in irons he will tell what he did with the diamond."

Uncle Thomas stopped for want of breath. Evelyn had risen from the lounge, and stood sobbing with her hands over her heart. Thekla just turned her great eyes upon Uncle Thomas, and the expression of her face appalled me. The thunder shook the house, and the awful flashes of lightning almost blinded me. I heard a sound of steps at the door, and Stanley and Brad came into the room.

"Oh, you have come to face us with your shallow lie, have you?" began Uncle Thomas. "To-morrow, my young man, those dainty hands shall be decorated with iron bracelets, and you shall be made to tell the truth."

"Hush!" We all looked toward Thekla in astonishment. Her voice was low and deep, but we heard it above the roar of the storm. She had not risen, but sat with that strange, unearthly expression upon her face, her eyes wide, and deep, and black, one hand raised aloft. "Hush!" she said; "do not use such words to an innocent man. I am the thief. I stole the diamond. Brad Wilverton tells you only heaven's truth. I stole the diamond. I sent it the next day in a letter to Buffalo, with a letter, asking the man who would do *anything* upon earth for me, to sell it at the highest price he could obtain, and to send me the money. He did so, asking no questions, as I knew he would not. He sent me four thousand dollars. Whether the ring came to all that I cannot say. Perhaps he added to it. I had one thousand dollars of my own, and this I enclosed with the four in a letter to Brad Wilverton, placed it in another envelope, with a request to this man to post it in New York. He did it, and Brad Wilverton received it, not dreaming from whence it came. Do you ask why I did this wicked thing? Because the happiness of Brad Wilverton is dearer to me than the salvation of my own soul. Because I love him as Christians love their God. He never asked this love—he never dreamed of it, nor would he have known it but for this; yet I am not ashamed. I have loved him, I do love him, and I always shall love him. I knew he only lacked a few thousand dollars to make him very happy. For a year I have thought of nothing else, only how could I obtain money for him. I am not sorry for what I have done, I am merely sorry that I have failed and been detected. The ring was a paltry jewel, and there are thousands of dollars more where the price that was paid for it came from. I felt that in doing this I was serving *my* idol, and I would do far greater and worse things to make him happy. He is innocent—he has no part in my sin, if sin it be, and I alone am guilty. I am willing to suffer the penalty of the law. All I ask is that you, Brad Wilverton, will not condemn the woman who loved you as no woman ever will love you again. I—" but the words were cut short. There was an awful crash of thunder, a blinding flash of lightning, and all down one side of the house was a blackened, charred, scorched streak which ran along under the window and across the slender figure seated there. She never even moved or moaned, but just fell back against the wall, very still and silent, and—dead!

It was all explained when they came to look. The lightning rod upon that side of the house was broken in two places, and the lightning having struck it, entered the house at the breaks, and had made a victim of the one in its path.

It was a tragical ending to the pleasant summer. The world never knew any of the unpleasant circumstances connected with her death, only that she was killed by lightning. Stanley followed up my diamond, and secured it again for me after considerable delay and expense. I have it still, but I never wear it. I cannot bear to put it on my finger. Thekla's strange disclosure, and her tragical death, sobered Brad down, and he soon, by attending strictly to business and cutting his fast friends, was in a position to marry. I often visit him and his wife in their pleasant home, and we sometimes go to the graveyard and put flowers upon a grave marked only with a stone bearing one word, "Thekla."

☞ "Ella, my child," said a prudish old maid to her young niece, who would curl her hair in pretty ringlets, "if the Lord had intended your hair to be curled, He would have done it Himself." "So he did, aunty, when I was a baby—but he thinks I am big enough now to do it myself."

☞ An old negro patriarch in Pennsylvania died, and there was a great turn-out to the funeral. As they filed past the coffin the master of ceremonies became impatient at their slowness, and strutting along the street in front of the house, called out in auctioneer-like tones, "If any mo' of you ladies and gemmen want to take a look at Uncle Ben, *now's yer last chance;* jes walk right up, quick, for we's jes gwine to *screw him up!*"

☞ A young lady Down East advertises for the young man that "embraced an opportunity," and says that if he will come over to their town he can do better.

☞ A celebrated writer says that "tobacco has killed kissing."

☞ An English woman, wanting to show her appreciation of her minister's earnest and forcible action, remarked, "He knocks about pretty tidy in the pulpit for an old gentleman."

☞ Somebody once asked Tom Corwin if he had heard a certain story of Lewis D. Campbell's. "Was it about himself?" inquired Mr. Corwin. "No, I believe not." "Well, then, I never heard it," said Mr. Corwin, gravely.

☞ While the burial service was progressing in Wisconsin, the corpse vacated his coffin and remarked that his friends hadn't got rid of him yet.

☞ The Chicago papers denounce as the inventions of the Munchausens of the New York press all the stories of the hangings of incendiaries, the profanity of the *demi-monde* routed from blocks in which they did not live, the cremation of the Court House prisoners, and the incessant robberies and rapine in the streets. All are pronounced "pure and baseless fictions."

☞ Unprotected female (awaking old gent, who is not very well)—"Oh, Mister, would you find the captain? I'm sure we're in danger. I've been watching the man at the wheel; he keeps turning it round first one way and then the other, and evidently does not know his own mind."

LOVE AND HATE;

OR,

THE POISONED NECKLACE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY T. A B.

Virginie D'Orsay was one of the most promising pupils of the celebrated Conservatory of Music, at Paris.

Young, pretty, and with just the slightest touch of *abandon* in voice and manner, Virginie was a great favorite with her master, M. de Gansins—who unhesitatingly declared that, at no distant period, she would be one of the most brilliant stars that had ever graced the "boards" of the *Grande Opera*.

Thus, at sixteen years of age, Virginie was preparing for her formal *debut;* although she had frequently appeared in private performances: and as she had always been fortunate in rendering her *roles*, she looked forward with joy to the day when she should be able to assume the title and style of a prima donna.

Virginie was an orphan—her mother having died shortly after her birth; while her father had lived long enough to rejoice in the knowledge of her possessing a most charming voice, which he did not doubt, if properly cultivated, would secure her a life of affluence.

Bequeathing her to the care of his best friend (De Gansins,) M. D'Orsay departed tranquilly from a life of trial and privation—satisfied that his daughter would make her mark in the musical world, as well as prove a credit to the discipline in which he had educated her.

Among the many admirers of M'lle D'Orsay, in her private performances, was a young French nobleman, who seemed greatly smitten with the fair singer, and whose presence she had learned to watch for and desire.

Victor le Noir was the son of one of the wealthiest and most distinguished citizens of Paris. M. le Comte le Noir was well supplied with worldly goods—and his only wish was that Victor should marry a rich wife.

On the day previous to Virginie's appearance, as Victor was strolling along one of the principal avenues of the "Champs Elysees," he was attracted to a spot where a large number of gentlemen were congregated. Supposing that some accident had occurred, he at once advanced, and was surprised to hear his own name mentioned in conjunction with that of M'lle D'Orsay.

"I maintain it, gentlemen, that Virginie D'Orsay is one of the most bewitching creatures in existence; no wonder that young Le Noir should have fallen head-over-ears in love with her; I've done so myself, I don't know how many times—Hic!" And the speaker subsided into the seat from which he had just risen to expatiate, in his intoxication, on the charms of the young lady aforesaid.

Victor approached nearer, and recognized in the figure before him a former comrade and class-mate, who had fallen from the higher sphere of manhood into the ditch of degradation—and as he gazed, Victor mentally repeated to himself the resolve never to follow the example of the wretched and debased specimen of creation, who lolled in unseemly drunkenness before him.

The rest of the company had not perceived him, so he remained and listened to the conversation; for he was desirous of finding out how the rumor had got afloat.

"Why, the most natural occurrence on earth," remarked one of the by-standers to his nearest neighbor; "the girl is pretty, and has a superb voice—while the young fellow, Le Noir, is handsome and wealthy—taken altogether, it would be a capital match."

"How did De Varian find it out?" asked another person of the speaker who had just finished.

"He has seen them both at the private entertainments," answered the man, "and the fellow watched her so eagerly, and vented his admiration so freely, that it was of course observed by nearly all of those present; De Varian has been there, and noticed it several times."

"Yes, gentlemen," continued De Varian; "but I'm afraid that *mon pere* (hic) will not consent—you know that the old man (hic) rich as he is, has always been contriving how to inveigle another long (hic) purse into the family treasury!"

Victor was about to turn away in disgust, and leave the chattering crowd, when suddenly every one was startled by the appearance of a carriage, carried rapidly along the path leading into their midst by two splendid horses,—both of which seemed positively insane with fright.

In the rear of the vehicle ran a multitude of shouting people, who screamed to those before them to stop the horses in their flight—the driver vainly endeavoring to clutch at the flowing reins.

On the back seat sat a beautiful woman, whose marble-pale face resembled that of a statue more than a human being; she was apparently stunned by the sudden danger which had confronted her.

Of course each one was calling to the other, and never thought of intercepting it; but just as the carriage was rushing past, Victor sprang forward and seized the bit of the nearest runaway, and by the shock of the sudden check both animals were thrown back upon their haunches, struggling wildly to escape.

At this critical moment, while the spectators stood as if spell-bound, a slight girlish figure advanced, and in an instant had flung her mantle over the heads of the startled creatures, who, at so unexpected a procedure, became immediately motionless.

"Monsieur," she said to one of the nearest of the bystanders, "pray hold this cover down securely on the other side—so," as the man approached, and did as she desired.

The coachman at once leaped from his seat, at which movement the horses again endeavored to run, but they were promptly restrained by several men, who had recovered their senses in time to assist in the protection of the lady and her deliverers—for such, undoubtedly, Victor and the brave young girl were.

The lady alighted and retired into a refreshment saloon near at hand; and, as she disappeared through the door, Victor involuntarily turned and gazed at his fair companion.

Virginie D'Orsay stood before him!

Need we say that after this occurrence Victor's love deepened and became more passionate than ever, and that Virginie reciprocated his affection?

Another person was also enamored of our hero.

Madame Vanzetti, the lady whom Victor and Virginie had rescued from a terrible death, was not insensible to the personal appearance of the young Count; and being still youthful and beautiful, as well as a widow of great wealth, she resolved to spare no pains in bringing him to her feet.

Accordingly Virginie received a present, accompanied by a dainty, scented note: "Begging that Mlle. D'Orsay would accept of a slight tribute from Mme. Vanzetti, as a regard for personal beauty, worth, courage and charming vocal powers"—the gift being a diamond necklace—"which," Madame assured her, "was a family relic of great antiquity and intrinsic value."

When that lady heard that Victor and Virginie were lovers (even though her own eyes were witnesses to the truth of the statement,) she would not allow herself to believe it; but when the Count informed her that he was paying his addresses to Mlle. D'Orsay, no pen could describe the whirlwind of passions which surged within her bosom, though to all outward appearances she seemed so calm.

With all the burning hatred of an Italian heart, she had sent Virginie the before-named present, hoping that she, with woman's natural love for rare gems, might wear it at the theatre, and before long fall a victim of the glistening reptile's secret—the necklace being in the form of a serpent: its head and tail forming the clasp.

Little did the unsuspecting girl imagine that in the precious chain of jewels there was secreted a charm—a subtle, death-dealing power, which once fastened upon her slender throat, would leave a sting behind that no known antidote could remedy—no mortal effort restrain.

"No, I shall not wear it," said Virginie to the maid who assisted in arranging her toilet; "it will not harmonize with my costume, as I am to personate a simple village-girl. Put it into the box, Nanette; I can't understand the reason why, yet somehow I dread that string of diamonds."

Nanette assured Mlle. that nothing could be disagreeable that existed in so beautiful and costly an article; however, Virginie would not wear it, so the dangerous "article" was soon consigned to the handsome casket with which it was presented.

Shortly afterwards, while Virginie was on the stage reaping golden opinions by her exquisite vocalization, a dark, queenly woman, seated in one of the proscenium boxes might have been seen watching closely every movement of the youthful singer. A cloud of passion disturbed the calm of her countenance as she murmured:

"So she does not wear it! Has Fate let this opportunity pass by unnoticed?"

She was interrupted by loud bursts of applause, and the curtain descended on the first act of the opera.

Virginie's performance was a perfect success; whenever she appeared she was greeted with enthusiasm. And, as she stood entirely surrounded by flowers, bowing her thanks to the audience, Madame Vanzetti drew back in her box, and hissed through her set teeth:

"Flowers—yes! she *shall* have flowers—aye, a heavier crown than that which she now carries so proudly! Since the necklace has failed in its mission, another death-blow shall be struck." A sound behind her chair caused her to turn, and face to face she encountered the young Count le Noir!

The storm-clouds of passion were immediately changed into radiant smiles.

Had Victor heard the serpent's whisper?

It was the first night of a new opera, and the streets of Paris were filled with the carriages of the *elite* of the city, while the poorer classes were content to follow on foot.

Flaring posters in every direction announced that M'lle D'Orsay was the Prima Donna; and, as she was "the fashion," crowds rushed to hear her.

The scene in the interior of the opera-house was brilliant in the extreme.

The overture was ended—the audience awaited in breathless suspense the tragic *finale* in which the piece culminated.

Round after round of applause swelled through the air, and numberless bouquets and floral devices were showered down on the stage from all parts of the building. Again Virginie, the heroine of the sombre tragedy, appeared surrounded by an almost impenetrable garden—even more so than upon the night of her *debut*.

The fashionables wondered at the absence of Madame Vanzetti, as she was not to be seen in her usual seat; nor did she appear during the course of the evening.

Virginie happened to raise her eyes to the highest row of boxes, considerably above the stage, and her glance rested on a woman dressed entirely in black; the face was veiled, but she recognized the figure, and above all the fierce, dark eyes glaring down upon her.

As she gazed upward, a black-gloved hand was extended over the front of the box, holding in its grasp a superb coronet of blood-red camelias.

Horrified by an unknown terror, she gave utterance to a loud shriek, and stood transfixed as the wreath of flowers was hurled suddenly and swiftly downward—in another moment she was caught in the arms of Victor le Noir, who had observed her agitation, and the cause of it. At the same instant the coronet struck the stage with a shock that resounded through the whole building, causing every one to rise involuntarily to their feet in surprise and horror.

Victor imagined that he heard a stifled laugh as the woman in black disappeared.

Pointing to the vacated seat he shouted:

"The would-be-assassin was there!" And he held up the band, now devoid of floral covering, and disclosed to the wondering view of the spectators *a solid iron crown!*

Of course the next morning all Paris was excited over the transaction at the opera house, and nothing else was spoken or thought of; from the richest lord to the poorest mechanic, the attempted murder (for as such it was considered) of M'lle D'Orsay was *the* sensation.

And Virginie? Naturally the most shocked, people were astonished that she recovered her senses before any one else in the city.

She and Victor had mutually exchanged suspicions to the effect that the event had transpired from jealousy. And what was still more mysterious, both Nanette and the jewelled bauble had disappeared, and no traces of them could be found.

Accordingly that same morning the Count visited the Vanzetti mansion.

At the door he was met by a servant bearing a letter, which on tearing open he discovered to be from the object of his search.

It read simply thus:

"MIA CARA—I knew you would come to me, and therefore I await you. I loved you fondly, as you well know, and in my heart I swore to wreak vengeance against the destroyer of my hopes—Virginie D'Orsay (hated name!)—and last night I attempted to carry my scheme into effect, but failed, as I afterward learned. The iron crown has proved of no avail, but the poisoned necklace has done its duty. Fate wills it so, and I must be content. *Addio per sempre!*

"ZENOBIA."

Victor read this, but was mystified as to its meaning. The mention of the lost jewels caused him to believe that Madame Vanzetti knew of their disappearance, and had doubtless bribed Nanette to assist her again in obtaining possession of them. He also remembered the ominous words uttered by the lady, supposing herself alone, at the opera, on that never-to-be-forgotten evening.

That part of the mystery remained unsolved.

Summoning the domestics of the household, he rushed towards madame's private apartment. The door was fastened—no answer to his repeated knocks—in another moment it fell back on its hinges, and he entered the chamber.

There, reclining gracefully on the velvet cushions of a luxurious divan, he beheld all that was mortal of Zenobia Vanzetti; and, as a stray sunbeam darted in through the window, it mirrored itself in the rainbow tints of the mysterious gems which had been the cause of so much sorrow and misfortune.

Like another Cleopatra she herself had placed the serpent's fang upon her bosom, and then yielded to Death's embrace, waiting the arrival of the man she had loved, and expired with a bitter smile of welcome curving her silent lips.

M. le Comte le Noir at length gave his consent to the nuptials of his son and the fascinating singer, being satisfied with the name and fortune which Virginie had won.

* * * * * * *

In the burial-ground of Pere la Chaise stands a splendid marble monument, which attracts the attention of every observer, on the base of which is engraved the words:

ZENOBIA:

"*Addio, per sempre!*"

And circling round the inscription is carved a fac-simile of the fatal diamond necklace.

NOTE.—In order that the foregoing narrative may not appear too incredible to some of its readers, it is only necessary to explain the *seeming mystery* of the diamond necklace, which can be done in a very few words.

It was the custom among the Italians of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Venetians especially—when they cherished a feeling of enmity against any person, to send them some jeweled ornament—such as a ring, bracelet, necklace, etc., in which was concealed, among the setting or filagree work, a small piece of metal in the shape of a lion or tiger's paw, containing a deadly poison; the least scratch or puncture of the skin by this unexpected agent of vengeance was sufficient to cause death—generally in a few hours, but in some instances months elapsed before the victims were relieved from their sufferings.

THE HALLOWEEN SPECTRE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY OLIVE MAY.

A chaise and pair stopped at the door of a small inn at the upper end of the village of Woodford, in ——shire, late one October afternoon.

A well-dressed valet assisted a gentleman to alight. He seemed in feeble health, and had a cloak wrapped around him.

The attendant helped him into the inn, asked the landlord for a private sitting-room and bed-rooms, and ordered dinner at once. In a short time a hot joint of roast mutton, with vegetables, etc., was ready, and was seemingly enjoyed by the gentleman, whose appetite was sharpened by the drive. When he threw off his cloak he was seen to be a man of about forty-two or three, with a fine, tall form rather wasted by ill-health, and features of noble outline, attenuated by the same cause. An air of deep melancholy pervaded his whole manner.

He had sent out his valet on some errand, and when he rang the bell for wine and cigars, it was answered by a young girl plainly dressed, but of a remarkably sweet and engaging countenance.

As she busied herself in clearing the table, the stranger, whose name was Varney Melton, noticed her, and seemed struck by her appearance. He looked at her so fixedly that she blushed crimson, and stepped back a little.

"Stay, Miss," said the gentleman, hesitatingly. "Excuse me. It seems as if I had seen or known you before."

The girl made no reply.

"Are you the landlord's daughter?"

"Oh, no, sir; I am only a servant at the inn."

"A servant?" The gentleman mused. "What is your name—your age?"

"My name is Dora Lee, and I am past seventeen."

The shy answer was given with evident painful embarrassment. She gathered up the dishes and went out of the room.

"Dora Lee!" the stranger repeated. "How very singular the resemblance! It brought the blood in a rush to my heart."

He rose and paced the room in troubled thought.

In about an hour the valet returned, and found his master reclining in an easy chair, wrapped in painful musings. Rousing himself, he bade the man desire the landlord to come to his apartment.

The young girl, about the same time, was seated in a small side room adjoining the kitchen, where the fat, red-faced landlady was superintending an unusual display of cooking, and the movements of several domestics.

Dora had closed the door, and was sewing by the light of a kitchen lamp. She had been crying, and convulsive sobs still heaved her bosom at intervals, while she wiped away tears with a white little hand, that had not lost its beauty through menial toil.

A door leading into the passage was opened, and a very handsome young man entered. He walked softly up to Dora, and stooping, kissed her fondly.

"Oh, Frank!" she exclaimed, startled very much.

"My own darling! what have you been crying about?"

The answer was a fresh burst of tears.

"Dora, my sweet Dora! what is the matter? Has anything happened?"

"Oh, no, Frank!"

"But there must be some cause for your distress. Tell me! I have a right to know. Dora! you must not keep it from me."

"I am only foolish; nothing has happened; nothing, I assure you."

"You are not so foolish as to weep for nothing! Has my mother been scolding you?"

"Oh, Frank! she hates me!" cried the girl, passionately.

"She has no cause; you are mistaken."

"I am afraid," the girl went on, "she suspects that you are fond of me! What would she say if she knew—"

"If she knew you were my own wedded wife? She shall known it soon, Dora."

"Frank!" exclaimed the girl, starting up, her face white with alarm, "what do you mean?"

"I have the prospect of a clerkship in the house of Effingham & Co., in London. I am to hear about it finally next week. I shall have a salary that will support me and my little wife. Do not be afraid, Dora: we shall soon be independent."

The girl's violet eyes gleamed with joy.

"You are so good to me, Frank, dearest," she said, fondly looking up in his face. "The most that troubles me is—"

"What, darling wife?"

"How angry your mother would be if she knew you had married me. I am not only penniless, but an outcast. I do not know who were my parents."

"You are the dearest and sweetest little girl in the world!" cried her young husband, kissing her again, "and we love each other, do we not?"

"But, Frank, I did not know when you persuaded me to marry you, that my birth might be a disgrace to you!" the beautiful girl said, with a sigh that seemed to rend her heart.

"I will not have you talk in that manner!" cried the young man. "You are pure and good enough, Dora, to be above any fault of your parents, whoever they were. And I do not believe your birth was not honest. I know you must have come of respectable parents; for 'blood will tell,' they say, Dora!"

Dora clasped her hands, and her cheek flushed radiantly.

"Oh, if I only knew that I had honest parents, I should care for nothing else!" she said. "Frank, I sometimes think—"

"Say no more, now, dearest!" "I must go out. Dry your eyes, and keep up a good heart."

"I will!" the girl promised, as she received the parting kiss.

Just as Frank closed the door, the one leading into the kitchen was thrown open. The irate landlady appeared. She had seen her son as he departed.

"Well, Miss!" she said, angrily, to the trembling girl: "I see how it is! You are trying to catch my son—are you! But you will find yourself mistaken, if you think of marrying him, I can tell you!"

Dora went on with her work, nervously, making no answer.

"Frank is going away," continued the dame; "and then there will be an end to this flirting; and you will find he has only been amusing himself at your expense."

Dora's eyes flashed as she lifted them with a swift glance.

"Oh, you need not look so indignant! You are a fool indeed, if you ever thought Frank meant anything by his silly admiration of your face. He cannot afford to marry a beggar!"

"I am not a beggar, earning my own living;" said the girl, meekly.

"Not far off from one! and base-born, at that!"

"You do not know that, I am sure!" was the more spirited answer.

"Look you," retorted the dame, sharply, "you may as well give up your ambitious designs on my son—at least till you have twenty pounds to call your own."

"And if I had twenty pounds," said the girl, timidly: "would you *then* forgive me, if I—liked him—or he liked me?"

The dame laughed long and scornfully.

"Impudent minx!" she exclaimed; "so you own that you have been looking out to entrap him? Well, you are as likely to have a hundred pounds as twenty, any time! and I may as well say I will give my consent when you can lay down twenty of your own. Till then, Miss, I expect you to keep out of his company. Now, come along and be about your work—serving supper for our guests."

Dora silently arose and followed her angry mistress to the dining-room, where supper was being served to a large party of villagers and farmers from the adjacent country.

Meanwhile the host was in conversation with Mr. Melton, who had been questioning him closely about one Silas Thorne, who had been living in or near Woodford many years ago.

"I cannot say even if he is alive," replied Clarke, the landlord. "I have not heard of him in a dozen years."

The stranger groaned.

"Did you know him?"

"I did not; I have only had this house ten years; I heard of him as a small landed proprietor, who had run through his property, and had been obliged to sell it. He had left this neighborhood before I came."

"Had he—any children when he went away?" queried Mr. Melton.

"None that I knew of," replied the host.

The stranger rose and paced the room in evident disquiet.

"Stop!" exclaimed Clarke. "I will tell you who knows all about him! He is an old resident here. There is Mark Tone."

"Where is he to be found?" asked Melton, pausing in his troubled walk.

"What a piece of good luck! He is here to-night!"

"Send him to me!" said the gentleman, seating himself.

The landlord hesitated.

"There is a festival celebrated here," he said, "and a couple of dozen men are at supper. Mark is one of them. You see it is All Halloween."

"Then, after supper let me see him."

"If you would not mind the trouble, sir, of seeing them at table, perhaps there are more who know something about Thorne. Or may-be you would rather send your man to question them?"

"It is a good idea," replied Melton, "I will thank you to take me into the dining-room as soon as they have taken supper."

"They are about done now, sir; at least with the meats. Shall we go?"

The stranger assented, and the host led the way to the dining-room.

The company seemed very merry over their supper. They were regaling themselves with the ale and home-made wine.

Melton took the seat to which the host led him.

"That is Mark Tone," whispered Clarke, pointing out a broad shouldered, ruddy-faced man about thirty-eight years old.

There was a hush on the guests, while one or two were speaking.

"I tell you, it's every word true," averred one of the company. "Farmer Dale told me he had seen the skeleton walk himself, at midnight on All Halloween."

"Stuff and nonsense!" exclaimed a hearty voice—that of Mark Tone himself. "The man was drunk or dreaming! I have often looked at the place as I passed, and noticed how the rains have washed away the ground till the bones of a man's hand are seen, as if thrust out of the sod. That is all."

"But there must be something in it," added another, in an awe-struck tone. "Why, else, are people so afraid of the place!"

The host explained to Mr. Melton that in one corner of the old cemetery, about half a mile distant, was the dilapidated stone enclosure of a tomb many years old, and half in ruins. The sod had been partly washed away, and part of a bony arm had protruded above ground. Such was the superstition of the common people of the village that many feared to pass the spot at night. The story ran that at midnight on certain holidays, the buried skeleton quitted the tomb, came out of the enclosure, and walked about the churchyard. Some deposed to having seen the ghastly figure on its march, but most of them had heard of it from others.

Mr. Melton became much interested in the discourse going on. At last he said laughingly:

"Why not test the truth of the legend this very night! It is All Halloween; let some one go directly to the spot, and see what is going on."

There was a general silence at this proposition. The hostess and several domestics, among them Dora, had meanwhile been busily occupied in carrying out the dishes, and bringing in glasses and clean plates, at this point two or three of them stopped to listen.

The strange gentleman repeated what he had said. None replied. Presently Mark Tone burst into a jovial laugh, rallying his fellow revellers on their cowardice.

"If I had my full strength," continued Mr. Melton, "I should take the adventure on myself. But I will give a reward—say twenty pounds to—to any one who will go to-night, and bring me word what he sees."

A murmur went round the table. Then a slight girlish figure came timidly forward, and after glancing round to see if the hostess had disappeared, Dora stood before the strange gentleman.

"I will go, sir," she said. Her face was pale, but resolute; she had repressed her trembling; her eyes were cast down; but she lifted them again when the stranger spoke.

"You!" he exclaimed, and all the guests murmured—"*She* cannot go!"

"I am not afraid, sir, indeed I am not;" the girl persisted, with earnestness.

"Why do you want to go?" asked the stranger, looking at her with a strange interest.

"I—I—am in great want of twenty pounds, *sir!*"

Some of the guests laughed. Mark Tone muttered. "The minx wants some new finery to catch a gallant, mayhap. She is too high to take up with common folks!"

Mark had proposed to the girl, and had been rejected.

"May I go, *sir?*" pleaded the girl in soft

imploring tones. "I know the way; I have often been there; I am not in the least afraid."

The gentleman smiling, drew a ring from his finger.

"You have more courage than any of them" he said, kindly. "I am willing you should go. Take this ring, and if you find the walking skeleton, put it upon his finger. By that we shall know you have really been there."

Dora took the ring, and glided swiftly from the room, anxious to escape before her mistress could intercept her. In her dark cloak and hood, hastily donned, she bent her steps swiftly toward the churchyard.

Mark Tone loudly expressed his anger at her ambition and greed of the reward. Others thought she would not hold out to the end of the adventure.

Then the strange gentleman expressed his desire to go on with the inquiries he had intended to make. Mark Tone was called apart from the circle, and questioned particularly.

Yes; he had seen Silas Thorne again and again; he did not know what had become of him after he had lost his property; but he had heard lately of his death. He had one or two children; but he was sure they were dead; for the present occupant of the farm had told him so.

"Dead!" repeated the gentleman, and a deep gloom settled on his face. He groaned, and leaned back in his chair. "All dead!" he moaned bitterly.

"There was an adopted child—a girl," Mark went on.

Melton started up as if electrified.

"What became of her?" cried he.

"I believe she is dead, too; but I am not sure!" returned Mark.

"No—she is not!" put in an elderly man among the guests. "She left Thorne's house, and went to live at Gilbert's over the hill—I have often seen her there."

"Where is she now?" The gentleman's voice faltered with emotion, and he grew pale as death.

"That is easily answered. She went away from Gilbert's because his rough son presumed on her helplessness, and insulted her. She was a beauty, you see, and well read—though only a girl of sixteen. She came into the village to seek a place, and found one at this very inn."

"Dora Lee!" several voices exclaimed, Mark's among the rest.

"That was not her name!" groaned the strange gentleman, in an agony. "It was Emily—Emily Varney."

Clarke, the host said: "Her name is Dora Emily—so she told me at the first; and Lee was the name she had borne since she left Thorne's to go out to service, though she owned it was not her own."

Melton had started to his feet in wild excitement.

"It is the same girl!" he gasped, catching his breath; then he staggered a step or two, swayed to and fro, and would have fallen had not his valet caught him in his arms.

"It is too much for him," said the attendant. "I will take him to his room."

But Melton shook off his grasp, and controlled himself by a powerful effort.

"Listen, all of you," he cried in husky tones. "You shall see what a brute, what a fool I have been! More than eighteen years ago—I was a poor young man—George Varney—the husband of a dear and lovely wife. She gave me a daughter, and then God called her to Himself. I was distracted with grief; I was eager to escape from it: and some friends urged me to go with them to Germany. My child was a puny, sickly babe. I had no idea she would live. I trusted her to the care of my friend, Silas Thorne. He promised her the best care, and he was then a man of fortune with a wife and young family. I was hardhearted enough to leave my child. I went abroad and joined the army, content with hearing once or twice in a year about my daughter. She was still a sickly little thing, not likely to live.

"Years passed; I left the army, and married the daughter of a rich man who insisted on my taking his name, and promised me his fortune if I would do so. I lived happily with Antoinette, my second wife; but we lost the children given to us. Her father died, and then she left me, a rich, saddened, disappointed man. Then I fell into ill health. It is only within a few months that I have been able to travel in search of the child I abandoned in her infancy, whom I left to struggle with misfortune alone! Does she hates me now, if she refuses to acknowledge so unnatural a father, I am justly punished!"

Much excitement followed these words. The revellers had risen, and were crowded round the unhappy father.

At this juncture Frank Clarke rushed in, alarmed and excited.

"Gone to the churchyard—and alone!" he cried. "How dared you let her go alone?"

This was to his father. His mother stood by, fairly silenced for once.

Before any one could answer, Frank had snatched up his cap and hurried after Dora.

Meanwhile the girl had entered the churchyard alone. The moon shone brightly, and the shadows of the gravestones lay like black spots on a ground of silver. With the speed of a fawn she made her way towards the lonely corner of the cemetery, where the ruined enclosure was known to be.

The stone walls were black with age, and rough with incrustations. One side was covered with tangled ivy; the other was crumbling to decay. The door had fallen inwards, leaving a space wide enough for a slender person to creep in; the moonbeams fell on a tombstone, and a grave broken by the action of rains that had washed the earth away. The white bones of an arm were plainly seen, half covered with mould.

Resolute as she was, Dora trembled violently as she stood there, peering into the receptacle with its ghastly contents. Her face was white as marble; her teeth chattered as with an ague. She felt deathly faint; but the thought of Frank and of his mother's consent extorted by a compliance with her demand, gave her strength to go on.

She entered by the gap, stooped down, touched the bony hand, while a shudder ran through her whole frame, and slipped the ring on its finger. Then she started up, darted through the aperture, and strove to fly from the dreadful spot. But her strength suddenly failed, and she sank upon the ground insensible.

She was roused to consciousness by the striking of the bell from the tower. She counted twelve strokes; it was midnight. She sat up and looked around her. The flashes of moonlight and dark patches lay everywhere as before. But how it was with herself she could not tell. There seemed something weird in all about her. She felt a strange courage, a recklessness caused by her obscured senses.

She rose and looked around her, holding by the corner of one of the monuments, and turned her gaze towards the ruined enclosure. What was her amaze and horror to see the skeleton inmate standing *outside*, and to see it glide slowly towards her!

She did not feel alarmed as before. With fascinated eyes she watched the ghastly apparition. It stopped before one of the tombs near her, and for the first time she noticed a shrouded figure sitting there, the figure of a woman.

The skeleton lifted its head and pointed to the phantom seated; but it seemed still to be regarding Dora.

"Obtain from her my pardon!" said a hollow voice, addressing her, while the raised hand still indicated the shrouded figure.

Dora did not move.

"Ask her to forgive me," again sounded the voice. Then, as the girl moved not, a third time it spoke:

"Ask forgiveness, or be haunted by me."

Mechanically Dora moved towards the woman. "Forgive him!" she murmured. The phantom slowly shook its head.

"Forgive him!" again pleaded her low voice imploringly.

The apparition again rejected the prayer.

"Forgive him!" cried the girl, more earnestly, clasping her hands, "or thou canst not be forgiven!"

The prayer was granted. The woman rose, waved her hand assentingly, and stretched out one arm towards the skeleton.

The scene vanished from Dora's sight, and again she sank in a swoon.

She was found by Frank lying on the ground. Lifting her in his arms tenderly, he bore her homeward. It was like a heaven of rest when she opened her eyes to rest her head on his manly breast, but she did not speak. She only passed one slender arm round his neck and pressed it fondly.

When she was led into the dining-room of the inn, she found herself clasped in the arms of the strange gentleman. Her paleness brought to his view more strikingly her resemblance to his lost wife, and he no longer doubted that she was his own child.

Her artless story of her life confirmed his hopes. She remembered the name she bore to be Emily Varney. She had changed it when she went to service. She had a locket with her mother's hair and initials, which she had worn as an infant. This was recognized by Melton at once.

Openly claimed as the daughter of a rich gentleman, and assured that her birth was honorable, Dora found nothing wanting to her happiness. She presented Frank as her husband to her father, who shook his hand warmly, and said how much nobler he had proved himself than her unnatural parent. Melton confessed himself undeserving of so rich a treasure as such a daughter. But he promised to make amends to the young pair.

It may be imagined that the hostess was sincere in her congratulations. She had always, she said, seen something superior about Dora, and had loved her as a daughter.

The ring was found next day upon the protruding finger of the buried skeleton. As to what Dora had witnessed, her husband always thought it a vision born of her excited imagination. Just as she fell in the first swoon the impressions had been made on her senses; and we all know that a second may seem a long lapse of time under such circumstances. Dora herself was inclined to adopt this theory in accounting for what she fancied she had seen.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Oct. 23.—UTAH.—The trial of Hawkins at Salt Lake City ended on Saturday in his conviction, under the Utah statute. It will be remembered that Hawkins's first wife was the complainant. She testified that Hawkins "gave no reason for taking other women as wives except that she had had her day, and it was proper he should have some one else." The defence contended that Hawkins was not guilty, because legally married according to the usages of the Mormon church. The jury brought in a sealed verdict, which being opened on Saturday morning was found to be "guilty." Amid much excitement in the Court room the prosecution demanded that the defendant should be taken into custody, and the Court accordingly directed the United States Marshal to hold him as a prisoner. Time was granted to [illegible] a motion for a new trial. The Mormons will burn all they have and, make another exodus, as they did from Illinois."

Governor Hoffman has issued a proclamation appointing Thursday, Nov. 23d, as a day of thanksgiving for the people of New York State.

Oct. 27.—The Relief Society of Chicago, in reply to numerous inquiries from persons who cannot well send money, and wish to contribute articles, say that nothing is now so needed as beans, potatoes and onions. The Sanitary Society say the people must have these articles if they are to escape sickness. Straw beds, of the usual size for two persons, are also needed. The Relief Society are now feeding 40,000 persons, and have few vegetables on hand and but little coming.

FOREIGN NEWS.

GREAT BRITAIN.

LONDON, Oct. 22.—Sir Roderick Murchison, Baronet, President of the Geological and Geographical Societies, died yesterday, aged seventy-nine.

LONDON, Oct. 24.—The subscriptions to the Chicago relief fund continue to pour in. Nottingham has given £2,000; Kidderminster has subscribed £500; Edinburgh, £1,540; Perth, £120; Dunfermline, £150. As the details of the calamity reach this side by mail the interest and sympathy increase. Theatrical representations for the benefit of sufferers are given or projected everywhere. Mr. Clarke and the other American stars participate warmly in the movement.

LONDON, Oct. 26.—An explosion occurred to-day in the Leahan mine, near Newcastle. Thirty-three men were in the pit at the time, none of whom have been reached, and there is little hope of saving a single life. The families of the victims, with large numbers of people, are gathered around the mouth of the pit, and the former scenes of distress are renewed.

LONDON, Oct. 26.—The contributions to the Chicago relief fund received at the Mansion House up to last evening, amounted to £41,200.

The Times urges the despatch of prompt and liberal aid for the settlers in Wisconsin and Michigan burned out by the forest fires. The Times says if such help is not afforded to those unfortunate people, the ultimate sufferings which will result from the Northwestern fires will be greater than can follow the Chicago conflagration.

GERMANY.

DARMSTADT, Oct. 24, 7 P. M.—The Court Theatre in this city took fire at 5 P. M., and is now wrapped in flames. A heavy easterly wind prevails, and it is feared the fire will spread to adjacent buildings.

DARMSTADT, Oct. 24, 8 P. M.—The fire is rapidly spreading. The theatre is entirely destroyed, and a strong wind carries the flames and sparks westward into the upper town. The arsenal is in danger, and the troops of the garrison have evacuated it.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN.

The little gate was reached at last,
Half hid in lilacs down the lane;
She pushed it wide, and as she passed,
A wistful look she backward cast,
And said, "*Auf Wiedersehen.*"

With hand on latch, a vision white,
Lingered reluctant, and again,
Half doubting if she did aright,
Soft as the dews that fell that night,
She said, "*Auf Wiedersehen.*"

The lamp's clear gleam flits up the stair,
I linger in delicious pain;
Ah, in that chamber whose rich air
To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,
Thinks she, "*Auf Wiedersehen!*"

'Tis thirteen years: once more I press
The turf that silences the lane;
I hear the rustle of her dress,
I smell the lilacs, and—ah, yes,
I hear "*Auf Wiedersehen.*"

Sweet place of bashful, maiden art!
The English words had seemed to fain;
But—these they drew us heart to heart,
Yet held us tenderly apart;
She said, "*Auf Wiedersehen.*"

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

☞ A young woman out West, who lost her speech by a severe cold, had twenty offers of marriage in one week.

☞ Doing a stiff business—Starch manufacturers.

☞ A tax no one likes—Attacks on one's pocket.

☞ It looks funny to see a young lady with both hands in soft dough and a musquito on the end of her nose.

☞ The greatest bore in creation—The Mount Cenis Tunnel.

☞ What is the latest thing in dresses? Night-dresses.

☞ Motto for sewing-machines—As you sew, so shall you rip.

☞ A brick fell from a scaffold, on the head of a passing negro. "Fring dem dere peanut shells another way, won't yer," was the darkey's advice, as he scratched his wool.

☞ What were the last words the trumpeter said when he was gored by the bull? Blow the horns.

☞ Jacob and Sarah Trees, of Indiana, were unfashionable enough to live together in wedlock 59 years, with no divorce, and die within four hours of each other.

☞ Ought an advocate of the policy of non-interference in every difficulty be rewarded with a *meddle?*

☞ An Oregon chap says that they can't fool him on history. He doesn't believe that George three i's (III.) had any more optics than anybody else.

☞ This is the way a reporter out in Michigan puts it: "Some brute—a fiend in human shape, who may claim lineage from Darwin's ancestors, no doubt, but has not advanced sufficiently in the plane of humanity to be worthy of the name of man; a dastard, a villain; the vocabulary fails to furnish words sufficiently expressive to convey our contempt for the rascal—deliberately broke down a little tree on the upper part of Genesee street yesterday."

☞ Sacramento marvels at the strange actions of an unknown young lady, pretty and fashionably dressed, who eats roasted potatoes on the street, and sprinkles ashes upon them instead of salt.

☞ Squabbles, an old bachelor, showed his stockings, which he has just darned, to a maiden lady, who contemptuously remarked, "Pretty good for a man darner." Whereupon Squabbles rejoined, "Yes, good enough for a woman, *darn her.*"

☞ "I will bet you a bottle of wine that you will descend from that chair before I ask you twice." "Done," said the gentleman, who seemed determined not to obey the summons so obediently. "Come down!" "I will not!" "Then stop till I tell you a second time."

☞ "Do you keep accounts, Dick?" "Yes, I reckon."

THE MARKETS.

FLOUR—Sales of 2500 bbls, at prices ranging from $5@5,50 for superfine, $6@6,50 for extra, $[illegible]@8,25 for northwest family, $[illegible] for Pennsylvania and Ohio family, and $8,50@9 ₩ bbl for fancy brands. Rye Flour sells at $5 ₩ bbl.

GRAIN—Wheat—Sales of 30,000 bus at $1,53@1,59 for Western red; $1,55@1,57 for Penna red; $1,60@1,63 for Western amber, and $1,67@1,70 for white. Rye—Sales of Beans and Western at 95@97c, ₩ bus. Corn—Sales of 90,000 bus at 72@77c, for mixed; 75@80c for yellow, and 77@80c for white. Oats—Sales of 104,000 bus at 45@47c, for mixed, and 47@51c, ₩ bus for white.

PROVISIONS—Sales of Mess Pork at $14,50. Beef Hams command $23@24. Dried Beef may be quoted at 18@20c. Bacon—Sales of sugar-cured city smoked Hams at 14@15c; Excelsior Hams at 16c; ribbed sides at 9@9½c, and shoulders at 7½c. Green Meats—Sales of pickled Hams at 10@11½c, and shoulders, in salt, at 6½c. Lard—Sales at 9½@10c for Western steam and kettle rendered. Cheese—sales of New York factory at 13@14c. Butter—Bradford county fresh pails 26@28c; New York state fresh pails and tubs 26@32c; Ohio and Western fresh tubs, choice, 24@25c; pale yellow baking butter 9@10c; Pennsylvania roll 15@22c. Eggs—Sales of Pennsylvania and Delaware at 32@34c.

COTTON—Sales of 600 bales at 18½c for middling upland, and 19½c for New Orleans.

BARK sells at $35 ₩ ton for No. 1 Quercitron.

BEESWAX sells at 31@32½c ₩ ℔ for Yellow.

FRUIT—Green Apples are worth $2@4 and Cranberries $7@10,50 ₩ bbl.

HAY—Prime Timothy Hay, ₩ 100 lbs., $1,35@1,40; mixed $1,40@1,50; Straw $1,15@1,25.

IRON—Sales of No. 1 at $37@37,50; No. 2 at $36. Bar Iron is quoted at $2,50@54, and Nails at $4,50 ₩ keg. We quote Scotch Pig at $34@36 ₩ ton.

SEEDS—New Clover seed sells at 10@10½c, and old at 9½c. Timothy may be quoted at $2,90@3,25, and Flaxseed at $1,90.

PHILADELPHIA CATTLE MARKET.

The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 3000 head, and sold at 6½@8½c. 200 Cows brought $35@70 ₩ head. Sheep—16,000 head were disposed of at 5@7c. ₩ ℔. 6000 Hogs sold at $6,25@7,25 ₩ 100 lbs net.

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WIT AND HUMOR.

A BIG SCARE.

BY MARK TWAIN.

The following story was told me by a fellow passenger, who said he had never been scared since the time that he loaded an old Queen Anne's musket for his father. Said he:—

"You see the old man was trying to teach me to shoot blackbirds and beasts that tore up the young corn and such things, so that I could be of some use about the farm, because I wasn't big enough to do much. My gun was a single-barrel shot-gun, and the old man carried an old Queen Anne musket that weighed about a ton, making a report like a thunder-clap and kicking like a mule. The old man wanted me to shoot the musket sometimes, but I was afraid. One day, though, I got her down, and taking her to the hired man, asked him how to load her, because the old man was out in the fields. Hiram said, "Do you see them marks on the stock—an X and a V? Well, that means 10 balls and 5 slugs—that's her load."

"But how much powder?"

"Oh," says he, "it don't matter; put in four handfuls."

"So I loaded her up that way, and it was an awful charge—I had sense enough to see that—and I started out. I leveled her on a good many birds, but every time I pulled the trigger, I shut my eyes and winked. I was afraid of her kick. Towards sundown I fetched up at the house, and there was the old man resting on the porch.

"Been out hunting, have you?"

"Yes, sir," said I.

"What did you kill?"

"Didn't kill anything, sir—didn't shoot her off. I was afraid she'd kick."

(I knew very well she would.)

"Gimmus thay gun!" the old man said, mad as sin. "Do you see that sapling?"

I saw it and began to drop back out of danger. The next moment I heard an earthquake, and saw the Queen Anne whirled end over end in the air, and the old man spinning round on one heel, with one leg up and both hands on his jaw, and the bark flying from that tree. The old man's shoulder was set back four inches and his jaw turned black and blue and he had to lay up for three days. I havn't been scared since.

A POSER.

We submit the following abstruse question (meaning no offence) to the members of the various Debating Societies, if not too great a tax upon their mental powers and understandings. It was "argied" by the agricultural members of a Hoosier lyceum the other week, and the judges' decision is held in reserve, until the question has had more "spread."

"Eff'r man plants a watermillion seed next to his fence; and this 'ere watermillion seeds sprouts up into a watermillion vine; and that 'ere watermillion vine grows and meanders through that 'ar fence into another man's lot adjacient that 'ere watermillion vine that sprouted from that watermillion seed and meandered thro' that 'ar fence into this 'ere other man's lot adjacient; tharin consolidates and homologates into a watermillion, the question, feller citizens and ladies, is: To which of these 'ere men did that 'ar watermillion, so homologated and promulgated, belong? To the man who planted that 'ar watermillion seed that meandered thro' that 'ar fence into this 'ere man's lot adjacient and thar consolidated into a watermillion; or to the man who owned this 'ere lot adjacient, whar was so promulgated the watermillion that so exerggitated from t' at 'ar watermillion vine that meandered thro' this 'ere fence and so sprouted from that 'ar watermillion seed that that 'ere man there planted?"

BOUND TO BE SUITED.

Pitts is a sharp business man; and when Pitts goes into a store to trade he always gets the lowest cash price, and then says: "Well, I'll look about, and if I don't find anything that suits me better I'll call and take this." Now, quite lately, Pitts said to himself, "I am getting rather 'long in years; and guess I'll get married." His business qualities wouldn't let him wait, so off he travels, and calling upon a lady friend, opened the conversation by remarking that he would like to know what she thought about his getting married. "Oh, Mr. Pitts," she replied, "that is an affair in which I am not so very greatly interested, and I prefer to leave it with yourself." "But," says Pitts, "you are interested; and my dear girl, will you marry me?" The young lady blushed very red, hesitated, and finally, as Pitts was very well to do in the world, and morally and financially of good standing in society, she accepted him; whereupon the matter-of-fact Pitts responded, "Well, well, I'll look about, and if I don't find anybody that suits me better than you, I'll come back."

EVEN WITH HIM.

A distinguished ex-Governor of Ohio, famous for story-telling, relates that on one occasion, while addressing a temperance meeting at Georgetown, D. C., and depicting the misery caused by indulging too frequently in the flowing bowl, his attention was attracted by the sobs of a seedy-looking individual in the rear part of the room. On going to the person and interrogating him, he was told the usual tale of woe—among other sad incidents that, during his career of vice, he had buried three wives. The Governor, having buried a few wives of his own, sympathized deeply with the inebriate, and consoled him as much as in his power. Said he, "The lord has indeed afflicted you." The mourner, sobbing, replied: "Yes, yes, he has," and pausing a moment and wiping his nose, he continued: "but I don't think the Lord got much ahead of me, for as fast as he took one I took another.

A VOTE LOST.—One vote was lost in California thus: With considerable trouble the voter deciphered a poster announcing that certain candidates would address the inhabitants of Gilroy and vicinity, and after a moment'sdeepmeditation exclaimed: "Vicinity! Whar's vicinity? I've lived hyar-abouts for nigh onto fifteen years, an' thar ain't no such place, an' any party what *don't* know the geography of the country better nor that can't get my vote."

Such perfect love as this is seldom witnessed in this selfish world. It was developed last summer by a conversation in a dark corner of the West Point hotel piazza. The interlocutors were a young married couple: "Whose tweet?" "Why, oo's tweet." "No! oo's tweet?" "Oo's little birdy." The remainder could only be expressed onomatopoetically.

COURTESIES.—Always acknowledge courtesies in a kindly spirit. Throw a bouquet and a card of thanks to a serenading party, if not prepared to invite them in. If you haven't a bouquet or a card at hand, throw a bootjack, or a brick, or anything of that sort just to show your appreciation of the kindness intended.

A MAN in Nebraska has invented a new, powerful, double-acting salve, which shows powers never before exhibited by salves of any kind." The inventor accidentally cut off the tail of a tame wolf, and immediately applying some of the salve to the stump, a new tail grew out. Then picking up the old tail, he applied some of the salve to the raw end of that, and a wolf grew out; but he was a wild wolf and had to be shot.

Leaves from a Pocket Diary.

No. 1.

THE LONE CLEARING.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

It was about the roughest bit of road that ever a horse or man attempted to travel. The country thereabouts, for miles, was very little civilized. Every hollow was liable to be the rendezvous of a gang of lawless desperadoes who preyed upon their fellow men.

"Your business, Carnes?"

Just then I was acting the role of detective, and also, was attempting to drive in a few desperadoes where justice might lasso them. As I was observing, I had ridden far and hard that day, and was correspondingly depressed, having literally been on a wild-goose chase. I had, as I supposed, on good authority, taken the trail of "Powder Bill," a ruffian of the first water, who had been captured at different times by different smart people, but every time had played the best hand at the game—if not turning up trumps on their hands, he had played the deuce and won the game. He had gained his sobriquet of "Powder Bill" by somehow and somewhere getting his face filled with the "black percussion." This villain raided more upon the peaceable settlers, stole more horses, committed more unlawful misdeeds than any two renegades of the whole western border. He had proven himself so invincible in his murderous depredations, that a heavy reward was offered for his capture or death, by the citizens of L—— county.

I silently laid a wager with myself to win the stakes, but for weeks had been so completely baffled in my undertaking, that I had concluded "Powder Bill" must be in league with the "gentleman in black."

This day of which I am writing, I was sure that I had obtained a clue to his whereabouts. Not twenty-four hours before my passing of this route, he had been there stampeding a number of horses. That is, there was a diversity of opinion among the settlers as to whom to credit with the lawless act; a part of the settlers affirming that it was the work of Indians—a small party of predatory Apaches having recently been in that vicinity.

Conflicting stories brought conflicting trails, and so at nightfall I had found myself in a piece of wild country trying to get over a barbarous road.

To make my condition more trying and disagreeable, late in the afternoon my beast cast a fore-foot shoe, which, with the rough road, soon got her such a confounded limp that her gait threatened every moment to dislocate my spinal column.

Growing nervous as a woman, I got down at last and tried to foot it, leading my mare; but in less than half an hour I had tripped twice and fallen once, and got a worse sprain in the foreshoulder than my steed, therefore, my only alternative was to get a foot each side of her ribs and keep it there.

The twilight of the woody district upon which I was entering gave everything but an exhilarating influence to my cautious nerves.

I knew the nature of the section of country through which I was passing, therefore I kept a wary eye searching beneath the trees. As the twilight increased in the woods, long shadows got up under the trees and shook themselves; weird forms gamboled from hollow to hollow; faint whispers started among the underbrush with such distinctness, that the wonderful apparatus in my left side pumped away with too much rapidity for comfort.

To the man who says I was frightened and cowardly, I propound a conundrum:—How does he know the symptoms so well?

However, I was hungry and weary, to say the least, and the thought of a hearty meal and a shelter tantalized my mind with its improbabilities.

At last, getting clear of the goblins of that strip of woodland, I emerged into a bit of open country, and finally got my mare into a better three-legged pace.

The sun had been some time down, and a young watery moon hung its silver horn—as the poets say—low in the west; but to my practical eye, it looked, instead of a silver horn, like the paring of a huge thumb nail, and about equaled the same in light.

I turned my eyes about me, and half fancied that I saw on the other side of this open space the outline of a settler's buildings. My horse with ears pointed forward confirmed my suspicions.

Ten rods further on, and the figure of a woman arose from a clump of trees by the side of the rough road, and presented herself so suddenly that my horse shied, and come near throwing me.

"How far are you going, stranger?" she asked, with a tolerably good pronunciation.

"Till I come to a shelter for myself and horse."

"You can have both up yonder," pointing her finger in the direction of the dimly seen house.

I hesitated.

"A decoy, by heavens!" I said to myself, knowing well the nature of the country through which I was travelling.

"How far is it beyond here to New Sharon?"

"Eight miles of as rough bottom as you ever got over in daylight, stranger. Besides—"

"Besides what?"

"I wouldn't venture over there," pointing along the route which I must, of necessity, travel to reach New Sharon. "It is wooded the whole way, and there are sharp teeth and claws somewhere under its cover."

She had been scanning my face, holding her hand above her eyes to keep the trifle of westerly light from bothering her scrutiny.

"You are courageous," she affirmed.

"How do you know?"

"Because you are a man;" she sarcastically retorted, "and I want you up at the house. You had better come."

I was non-plussed by her manner.

"I am in danger," she explained, "we both are while parleying here. Come to the house. Get across the clearing as rapidly as possible. Stay, dismount, chirrup to the horse and let him go in advance. Will he mind your call?"

"Immediately, and no one else."

"Then cast him loose. Carry the bridle and saddle with you."

"Unhorsed and in the wilderness—what of an ambuscade?"

She uttered a scornful ejaculation.

"How much better are you than unhorsed already?"

True—I could not elude or evade pursuit with my crippled steed.

There was nothing to do but follow her back.

She stole, as I thought cautiously, through the young trees, and I silently followed.

The building was a rough, substantial structure, suitable for the place and the people.

The moment that we had entered, she barred the door and bolted the heavy wooden shutters, then raked open a bed of coals and set thereon a vessel containing coffee. She as silently and rapidly cut a junk of venison on the rude table, and the greater portion of a pone of corn bread beside it, and in a few moments motioned me to eat.

"Who were you watching for by the roadside?" I asked.

"You, I suppose?" she answered, in a subdued tone, which she meant should be a model for my voice.

I looked up questioningly.

A SUBJECT FOR TRIUMPH.

"What have you been crying for, George?"
"'Coth mamma wouldn't give me a thpunge-cake, 'coth I've got a thtummach-ache!"
"Ah ha! I've got a '*punge*-cake and a '*tummach*-ache, *too!*"

"My mother, years ago, learned me to pray," she went on in her pointed, concise way. "I had been praying for some one to come along, and was watching for the fulfillment of my prayer. As you came I must have been waiting for you."

I was still more mystified.

"I will tell you in a moment. My father had business relations in the East that became entangled beyond hope of disengaging the matter. In disgust he came West ten years ago. Shifting from place to place, he has but lately heard that matters are cleared up, and he received ten thousand dollars only day before yesterday at New Sharon. He takes too much liquor. He is not a drunkard, but is easily led beyond his depth, and strong drink is a babbler. I persuaded him this morning to go on to Dixmont, and place it in safety until he could decide upon his future course."

"And did he leave you alone, with the knowledge generally dispersed of his receiving this sum?"

"No, he took me as far as New Sharon with him this morning, bidding me await his return; but getting uneasy about our stock, and fearing that it might be stolen, I walked back, arriving a little before sunset. I was sitting in a thicket, two or three miles off, resting myself, when I became conscious of the muttering of voices talking in an undertone and evidently close to me. Directly from the woods upon one side of the rough road, to the woods on the other side, passed a party of men with their shot pouches slung to their shoulders, and their guns gleaming in the occasional sunbeams that came in through the branches.

The wind on the right quarter brought a few words to my quickened hearing. Ten thousand—attack at midnight—asleep, and a few other phrases and words led me to know that they were coming here. I did not enter the house, but put our horses and cattle into the barn, and securely fastened them in, then took up my position where you found me, and waited for *you*."

What intrepidity! Just the woman, or the girl, for she was little more for the time and place.

The glib pen of the romantic novelist would immediately do this heroine up in fine tints, clothe her delightfully, and hatch a first-class romance. Can we conscientiously do this? Let us see. While she had been rapidly running over her explanation, I had scanned her face. She was more than eighteen and less than twenty-five years old. Her eyes were large and light, but well set back under a broad but somewhat sun-burned brow. Her mouth was no cleft pomegranate, or ripened cherry, but was large enough, and small enough, and good enough. Her chin was prominent—her nose the very nose for such a face. Her abundant hair was simply braided away from her face, and fastened at the back of her head in no way noticeable, grand or Grecian. Bleach her complexion, frizzle her, puff and curl her, and you might have had a chance to go into ecstacies—as it was there was strength about her face, and in the well-developed form, entirely suitable to the occasion. Let us sum her up. As a friend, there would be no silly nothingness about her and weak deceitfulness; as a wife, she would never be led astray. In safety and prosperity she would never think of leaving you; in danger or death she would not forsake her post though hewn piece-meal.

"I am aware," she went on, "that I have inveigled you into danger. Perhaps no more than you would have met in riding forward. You are known hereabouts."

"Do you mean it?"

She smiled, and her eyes darkened.

"You are—" and she correctly gave my name and occupation. "They were speaking of you at New Sharon."

How she knew all this I did not inquire, instead—

"What do you propose doing?" I asked.

"They will return at midnight to effect an entrance. We must watch and receive them," and she pointed significantly toward the rifles leaning against the wall.

"If they effect an entrance—"

"We must not let them," was her pointed reply. "You are armed?"

I nodded.

She drew from a rude chest in the corner a pair of heavy pistols, examined them, and laid them upon the table. She then raked up the coals, and slid back a small metal plate in the shutters close to me, with the remark—

"Watch and listen here, while I keep a survey of the rear of the buildings. I am so afraid that they will stampede the cattle."

I drew out my watch. The hand pointed to half-past ten as we took our stations. I managed to keep wakeful enough for an hour or two, but as midnight passed without a sound, my weariness stole over me, and in vain I tried to shake off my drowsiness. For a time I succeeded, and then in defiance of danger I slept. My dreams rioted with horrors from which I was aroused by a hand upon my lips.

"Hist!" said a whisper in my ear, "they are coming. Do not move until you are fully awake."

By this time my senses had returned and were on the alert. Cautiously I arose—my boots I had removed in the early evening—and peered out of the small aperture in the shutter.

"Not there," she whispered, "they are stealing from the wood on the other side."

"How many?"

"Five or six, I made out, creeping noiselessly towards the buildings."

"How could you see them?" We had moved cautiously to the rear of the house.

"Look steadily towards that opening in the woods—accustom your eyes first to the dim starlight—there!"

Her hand unconsciously closed upon my arm until the grip was painful.

I then dimly discerned what to an unpracticed and unwatchful eye would have been nothing but the shadow of the trees—a dark shade creeping by the opening; another and another—six, sure. They were making for a ravine that would completely conceal them until they should be within a few rods of the house.

"How will they commence the attack?"

"I don't know. Do not speak."

Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed, even a full half hour. We stood side by side in the darkened corner, where we could command a view through the loophole.

I heard something—what? A peculiar breathing—a drawing in of the breath at the nostrils in a sort of gasp—a slight enough sound, doubtless made by my companion in her excitement. No, it was a cautious breathing at that very loop-hole in the shutter which I a few moments before had left. I certainly never before had such a sensation. It seemed to me that the ruffian must also detect our presence in the same manner. In a few moments the sound ceased. I then could discern, by concentrating all my powers of vision, that the aperture was free from obstacles. With a death-like step I crept up and applied my eye to the orifice, not without the expectation or probability of a bullet penetrating that organ.

A little back from the house stood a number of figures, evidently in consultation. Heaven! my practiced eye made them out—*Indians*. Convinced that there was no one near enough to hear my whisper, I conveyed to my companion the discovery that I had made.

She pressed my hand in hers without a word.

Half an hour more, and it must be two o'clock. Just then there was a knock upon the door.

"Halloo! halloo!" called a voice, "open your door, Simon Carter, to a belated traveller."

No response.

A louder knock and a louder call, and it was a *white man's voice*.

Still no answer.

"The old fool is playing possum. I'll take the front entrance, while you walk in by the back way."

The ruffians separated, half going to the rear, the other half striking some tremendous blows upon the plank door. At that moment one of the double barreled guns was thrust into my hands, while Susan Carter moved silently to the rear.

Their attack in her direction was the most energetic. I could hear the wood work of the door crack and splinter. Had her courage failed her? Why did she not fire? I then remembered that the aperture in the rear door was inconveniently high. She might be awaiting a sufficiently wide crevice made by their axes. By keeping my hand against the door near me, I ascertained that it did not give a particle, and I was just making a step towards her position, when I knew by the sound that a fragment of the rear door had been split away.

At that instant I was deafened by the report of the gun which she held, instantly followed by the other barrel. A yell of rage or mortal agony ascended outside, followed by silence; yet we could distinguish a groaning without. A moment later I had exchanged weapons with her, and was hastily ramming home the charges into the empty barrels.

The strange silence continued. But there came to us a peculiar scratching noise, for which I could in no wise account.

"The chimney," she gasped; "fire up the chimney."

The noise was explained. One or more of the ruffians had ascended the roof, and was scrambling down the capacious stone chimney.

I kneeled upon the hearth and pushed the barrel of the rifle up the flue. A stunning report followed; and down upon the hot embers and upon myself, floundering like a whale, toppled the body of a man. A random blow from the butt of my rifle stretched him before me in the darkness.

I knew by the sound of the running feet outside that there was a larger number than what I had counted, and my heart died within me. As a last resort I knew that they would fire the building.

"Try a roast, boys," shouted the hoarse voice that had first called out "halloo."

It was death to us for a certainty.

We could hear them moving about outside, and in a few moments a pungent odor stung our nostrils. They were firing the house. Stronger and stronger grew the scent of smoke.

"All is lost," gasped my companion, sinking upon her knees. "Is it not possible for you to escape from the rear, while I unbar the door and give myself up to my fate?"

A moment before I had dimly thought of such a thing, but her proposal brought it out in all its horrid deformity.

"No; escape or death for us both," I calmly replied. Besides, the fires were blazing now, which would expose me to their view. As the blaze increased the cattle in the stables began to stamp and roar, and the horses to neigh.

"Break in there and stampede the cattle, while we roast the old man out."

"Not so soon," she exclaimed between her closely shut teeth. "I have not jeopardized our lives for them to lose them now—the blaze reveals the doors of the barn—when the smoke surges aside, fire for the doors."

I took deliberate aim at the savage who was wrenching off the staple and fired. He leaped high in the air and fell. For the first time they realized their exposed position and ran for shelter. It had become only a matter of minutes now how long we should live. The heat was beginning to penetrate the interior.

The girl was on her knees close by my feet.

A wild, fierce shout burst from the edge of the woodland. The girl sprang to her feet exclaiming, "That's my father, but still we may roast before he can save us."

The first cry was followed by a roar like that of a wild beast, and then for a few moments Pandemonium reigned. The terrified stock in the barn, the hoarse cries of the combatants, and the crackling of the flames. In the height of it I drove up the barn from the door, and would have rushed outside and into the melee, but she restrained me.

"You are a stranger, and one party or the other will shoot you by mistake. Seek only a retreat in the rear of the stable."

It was over in twenty minutes, the renegades routed, and I squatted upon my haunches, shrugging my shoulder, which had had an unceremonious introduction to a passing bullet on my retreat from the house to the barn. Susan, from her retreat, was calling upon her distracted father, who was running in every direction but the right one.

The work of destruction was rapid. The roof soon fell in with a resounding crash, sending up in its fall a myriad of sparks.

Let us briefly explain the opportune arrival of Simon Carter. He had no sooner reached New Sharon and found that his intrepid daughter had returned to the clearing alone, than he became completely sobered from his rather too frequent potations, and realizing his own rashness in letting the matter of money be known, he secured the services of a few stanuch friends at New Sharon to ride out with him. Their arrival has been briefly described.

The settlers by the light of the blazing timber turned over the bodies of the few renegades who had met their just deserts during the attack, and discovered, through the paint and feathers, the attacking party were white ruffians disguised as Indians.

"Here's a rum go," shouted one of the late arrivals, rolling over a body with the toe of his boot. "I say, Carnes, who wins the stakes?"

Startled I hastened forward. It was "Powder Bill," dead as a nit. Yes, "Powder Bill" in all the regalia of an Indian on the war path. But to make assurance doubly sure the body was dragged to the brook close by, and the face was washed. By the scars and the powder stains and the entire cast of features he was identified.

Afterwards the reward was divided between us without dispute.

"What became of Susan Carter?"

"By George! I don't know." Carter talked before I left him that morning as if he should return to the Eastern States; but it is hard to get one of the border men to put on again the shackles of conventional life. My business did not take me in that direction again for a long time—and I don't know what became of them; but amid the stirring scenes of active life such incidents soon lose their vividness and interest, and are apt to drop into oblivion.

I am aware that there is no romantic termination to this sketch; but does it matter? Real life has more of the ludicrous than of the beautiful—tragedy and comedy being only a step apart.

Answers to Correspondents.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—All manuscripts sent to us should have the price marked upon them if any is desired. Writers of no literary reputation should be satisfied at first if a good field is afforded them to display their talents and gain a name. We do not guarantee the safe return of manuscript, but endeavor to return it safely when desired, and when the requisite stamps are sent. Articles may be good of their kind and not be suitable for our purposes. Experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their articles prompt attention.

A MAN WHO KNOWS (Hatteux, Va.,) writes as follows: "'Cat in the Kitchen' wants mango pickles 'without such a mess.' Certainly, my dear, I am only surprised that you did not apply earlier, to the 'fair and gentle-Post-ess.' I will give you a receipt which has resulted satisfactorily, to me, for—I don't suppose you care to know just how many years—and if, after a fair trial, you don't like it, you can return to your idols, you know. In the first place, don't, as you value your peace, 'select your ingredients carefully,' just put out of your sight the whole generation of spices, consign the pickling paraphernalia, entire, to a dark closet, don your most irresistible smile, and bonnet, sally forth, and buy your mangoes. John may, at first, grumble a little, at the 'expense,' men will be unreasonable sometime—but a little judicious coaxing will set all that right, and you will rejoice in a saving of ever so many per cent in the way of 'wear and tear,' besides jars innumerable, family and otherwise; *fun'ly*, because these same mangoes are sure to be 'John's' or 'Charley's' favorite, and if the object of your solicitude does not turn out 'just so,' I defy you to sit calmly by, while he, the John or Charley sneersaid, tastes and criticises, as 'Do you think, my dear, that your mangoes are *altogether* as nice as they were last year?' Under the infliction incident to their preparation you will insist that they *are* equally good, when the persistent critic will become so provokingly positive on the point, that there is no telling how the controversy may end. 'If there is anything more about mango, perhaps you'd like to know it?' of course there is, but the space allowed 'correspondents' admits of this suggestion only. Let 'Cats in the kitchen' preserve, in all their original beauty, their 'beautiful black,' blue, gray, or green, orbs, their 'pale Grecian noses'—Roman—or even pug—it all the Johns and Charlies go without mangoes, and they will find it 'a paying institution.'"

S. K., (Fredonia, Pa.,) writes: "I now seat myself to undertake what I have so longed for; that is, I have of late thought of being a poetess. I will, if you are agreed, write pieces for your periodical. I am a pretty good scholar, and as I thought to make myself of some use to this poor family I would write to you. If you accept my offer write and tell me the terms." Our correspondent is probably not aware of the fact, "Poets are born, not made." It is a common failing with young people to think that they will become poets, but success in this line is very uncommon. We are sorry that we cannot encourage you in your good intentions; but we should judge, from the internal evidence of your letter, that you would fail, and therefore cannot advise you to make the attempt.

SUBSCRIBER (Harvey's, Pa.) writes: "Here is a question we have been debating in our neighborhood, and which I cannot have decided to my satisfaction. Will you please put it before your readers and request an answer through the Post? Two boys, A and B, wish to trade penknives. A asks twenty-five cents to boot. B wants ten cents to boot; but finally they agree to split the difference. What was the difference, and how would they arrange it? We should argue the case in this way. By the terms of the 1st proposition A's penknife is equal to B's plus 25 cents. By the 2d proposition A's equals B's less 10 cents. The difference between these two values of A's knife is 35 cents. Split this and we have 17½ cents. Subtract this from the 1st value of A's, or add it to the second, and we find that it should give 7½ cents to boot."

A. M. B., (Savannah, Ga.,) asks: "Will you be so kind as to tell me how a young lady ought to act on New Year's Day? Should she help the gentlemen to cake and wine, or should they help her? And is it necessary for some older person to be present when there is but one young lady in the house?" It is the lady's province to invite the gentlemen to partake of the refreshments. Where a servant is kept it is usual to have the servant wait on the visitors. Where no servant is kept the lady herself will attend to their wants. In the case mentioned in your second question it is the custom to have an older person present.

J. W. R., (Green Lake, Minn.,) asks us to republish a poem printed by us several years ago, written, she thinks, by Henry Moreford, commencing:

"I know not, lost spirit, whose mansion of prayer
Must be where the angels their starry robes wear."

If she can send us the exact date of its appearance we will be better able to decide upon her request, as we might have great difficulty now in finding it. In answer to her second question we would state that the wife of Charles Dickens is still living, and that her maiden name was Hogarth.

A CONSTANT READER, (Moorfield, O.,) asks: "Please inform me through your column of answers, whether a person taking the Post is indebted to the Postmaster for postage or not, or is it prepaid?" You must prepay the postage. It amounts only to twenty cents per year, or five cents per quarter, payable in advance.

MARY, (Cecil county,) asks: "Please inform me through the correspondent's column what is the principal mineral contained in the Blue Lick Springs in Kentucky." The Blue Lick Springs belong to the sulphurous-saline group. Their principal mineral is Chloride of Sodium, or Common Salt. They contain besides, in small quantities, several other Chlorides, Iodides and Carbonates.

RIDDLER.

BIBLICAL ENIGMA.

I am composed of 19 letters.
My 1, 2, 12, is an animal mentioned in the Bible.
My 3, 4, is a Jewish month.
My 5, 10, 19, is an evergreen tree.
My 8, 14, 16, was an ancient mountain.
My 9, 6, 17, was the ancestor of a tribe.
My 13, 14, 7, is something very small.
My 15, 16, was the birth-place of a patriarch.
My 16, 11, 18, is a kind of grain.
My whole was an ancient measure.

ISOLA.

CHARADE.

My first denotes a brilliant place,
Where belles and jewels shine;
My next transports the merchant's stores,
Or produce of the mine;
Sweet pleasures in my whole abound
Apart from worldly strife:
By nymphs and swains it's always found
The happiest part of life.

RIDDLE.

Pray tell me ladies, if you can,
Who is that highly favored man,
Who, though he has married many a wife,
May still live single all his life?

WORD SQUARE.

Smallest.
A bird of prey.
To give assent.
Small particles of hail or snow falling with rain.
"Grinders."

ERL.

TRIGONOMETRICAL PROBLEM.

The altitudinal rise of a regular rising hill is 8 inches for every 15 inches on the level of its base. On the side of this hill, some distance up, a political pole, 30 feet 4 inches in length, was erected perpendicular to the level; but by a gust of wind this pole was broken some distance from its standing foot, and without separating at the broken place, fell over, lodged with its top 22 feet 8 inches from the foot of the yet standing perpendicular piece, further down the hill. Now: if the pole had broken at the same place, and the broken end, also without separating at the break, had fallen and lodged in *the contrary direction, up* the hill, it is required to find by plane Trigonometry the elevation or rise of the hill between the two striking points by the top of said pole.

DANIEL DIEFENBACH.

Kratzerville, Snyder Co., Pa.

☞ An answer is requested.

CONUNDRUMS.

☞ When is a young lady like an acrobat? Ans.—When she shows her sleight of hand—by refusing you!

☞ What is a young lady that refuses you? Ans.—Too no-ing by half!

☞ Why is one stall of a two-stall stable like a pretty girl? Ans.—Because it is seldom let alone!

☞ Why is a man who kicks out right and left like an ancient robber? Ans.—Because he's a freebooter.

☞ Why is an Englishman happier with two wives than with one? Ans.—He may be happy with one—it is not impossible—but he is nearly sure to be transported with two!

☞ Why can't you make a venison pasty of buck venison? Ans.—Because the pasty must be made of dough (doe.)

☞ Why ought venison to be only half cooked? Ans.—Because what's done can't be helped!

Read see that me but not my got
Up shall I love if me love for-
And you love you that love for be
Down and you if you do you shall.
Read up and down and you shall see.

☞ What sort of sympathy would you rather be without? Ans.—You don't want to be pitted (pitied) by the small-pox!

☞ Why is the root of the tongue like a dejected man? Ans.—Because it's down in the mouth.

[Ah, yes, the tongue is very sensitive; oblige us, kindest of readers, by swallowing a large wasp (a bee will do,) and believe us you will only feel it in the part that is-tongue (is stung.)]

ANSWERS TO LAST.

ENIGMA—Part, art, trap, rap, tar, rat. RIDDLE—Psalm 129, v. 3—"The ploughers ploughed upon my back, and made long *Furrows*." RIDDLE—Anything.

RECEIPTS.

RABBITS.—Rabbits being rather dry meat, are much improved by larding. Should the process be deemed too troublesome upon common occasions, a good effect may be produced by lining the inside of the rabbit with slices of fat bacon previously to putting in the stuffing. This is a very easy method of improvement, and ought never to be neglected. *Roasted.*—Have the rabbit trussed. Fill it with veal stuffing made with rather a larger proportion of marjoram than usual; egg the rabbit and cover with bread-crumbs. Chop up the liver fine; throw it into some good gravy for sauce. It should be served nicely frothed. *Boiled with Onions.*—Boil slowly, and send to table covered, or "smothered," with onion sauce.

INDIAN PONE.—Put on one quart of water in a pot; as soon as it boils stir in as much Indian meal as will make a very thin batter. Beat it frequently while it is boiling, which will require ten minutes; then take it off, pour it in a pan, and add one ounce of butter, and salt to taste. When the batter is lukewarm, stir in as much Indian meal as will make it quite thick. Set it away to rise in the evening; in the morning make it out in small cakes, butter your tins, and bake in a moderate oven. Or the more common way is to butter pans, fill them three parts full, and bake them. This cake requires no yeast.

QUINCE WINE.—Grate whole *quinces*, (cutting out rot and worms,) *squeeze* the juice through a flannel bag, and to each quart juice put 1 lb. sugar. Let it work long enough to clear out the pugs; when clear bottle it.